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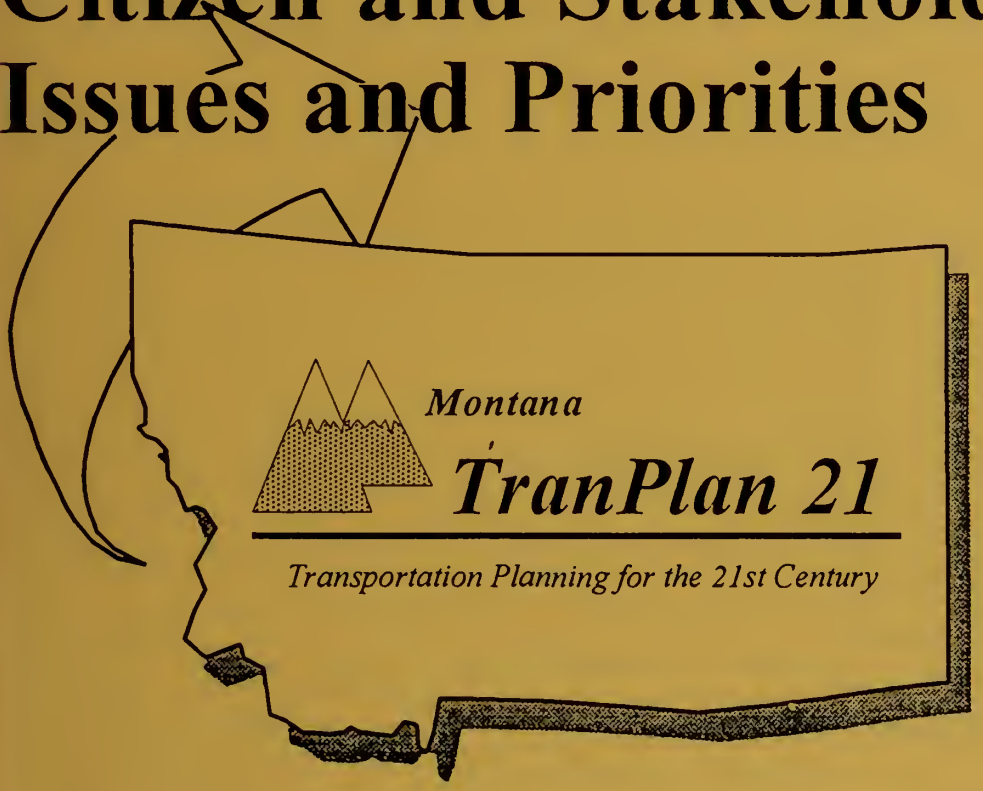
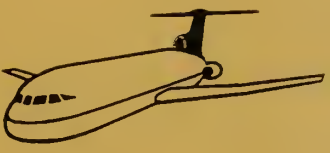
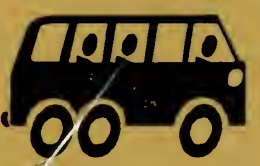
Volume IV

TranPlan 21 Citizen and Stakeholder Issues and Priorities







Draft Plan
Montana Department of Transportation
December 21, 1994

Prepared by:

DYE MANAGEMENT GROUP, INC.

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TRANPLAN 21 VOLUME IV

CONTENTS

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This volume presents the results of the three major public involvement efforts carried out as part of the TranPlan 21 process. Each of the sections in this volume is intended to serve as a "stand alone" document. Each document provides:

- The approach to gathering the public input presented; and
- The results of the effort.

This volume contains the following documents:

Issue Identification Results

This document presents the results of a detailed issue identification process that involved transportation users, providers, and stakeholders in meetings throughout the state. This initial public involvement effort identified the issues addressed in TranPlan 21 and gave it direction.

Public Comments on Plan Alternatives and Policy Choices

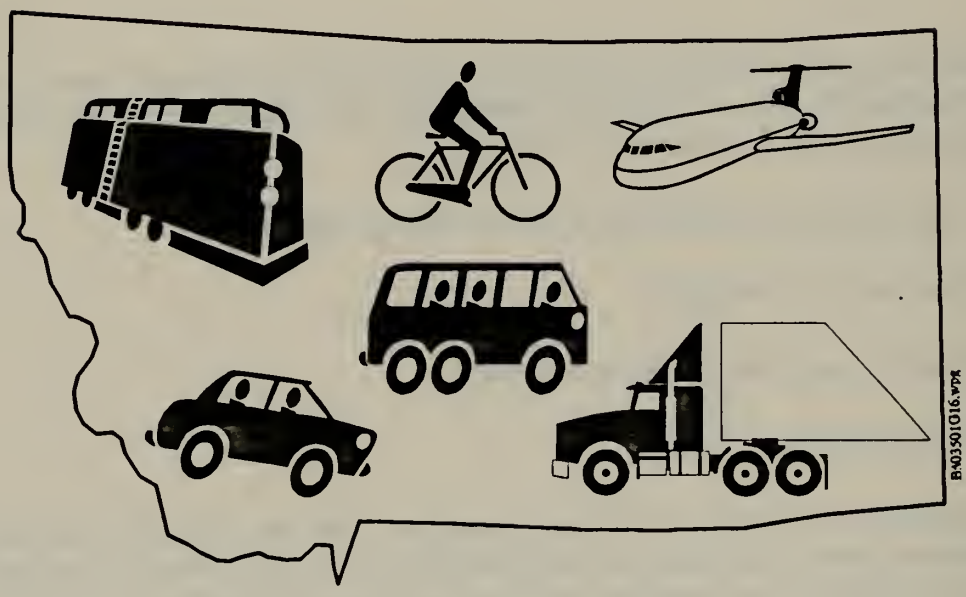
This document describes the plan alternatives and policy choices preferred by citizens and transportation interests in Montana who attended a second series of meetings throughout the state. The purpose of the public involvement effort presented in this document was to continue the dialogue that began with the issue identification process and to involve Montanans in setting priorities for the future of the state's transportation system.

Public Opinion Survey Results

This document provides information on the most pressing transportation concerns and priorities for state action identified by 710 Montanans. MDT conducted the survey to obtain direction from many Montanans who have not traditionally taken advantage of other public involvement opportunities.

Montana Department of Transportation

TranPlan 21



Issue Identification Results

December 1994

prepared by

DYE MANAGEMENT GROUP, INC.

Montana Department of Transportation

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Executive Summary

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The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is preparing Montana's first statewide multimodal plan TranPlan 21. As a first step, MDT undertook an extensive effort to involve the citizens, transportation interests, and Tribal Governments in Montana in a dialogue about their preferred future for the State's transportation system. This initial public involvement effort identified important issues and gave direction to TranPlan 21. A total of 259 people signed in as participants in public involvement meetings. Others provided input in writing or by telephone. It included public open houses in Butte, Great Falls, Missoula, Kalispell, Miles City, and Billings. MDT representatives also met with a wide range of transportation interests and providers in the State and representatives from all tribal governments. In addition, the Department received a number of letters and phone calls expressing individual concerns.

The issue identification showed that many Montanans share similar concerns about the current transportation system and a largely common vision for the future. Following are the most important general and modal issues identified by the public input. The concerns expressed in this document reflect those of meeting attendees and do not necessarily represent the views of all Montanans, nor those of the MDT.

A. GENERAL ISSUES

The following provides an overview of the overall concerns and issues that were raised by participants.

- **Desire for a multimodal transportation system.** Participants recognized the importance of moving to a multimodal transportation system. This is true in particular in the urbanized areas of the State. While most participants realized that the automobile will continue to be the most important means of transportation, they also thought that it is time to start providing alternatives where it is feasible and to make provisions that will allow for the use of these alternatives in the future.

- **Desire for a broader role for MDT.** Participants seemed to envision a broader role for MDT than it has had in the past. They felt that a shift from an agency that is mostly concerned with roadway construction activities to one that helps better manage the overall transportation system is needed. There is a recognition that many transportation problems are not local but regional or corridor level, involving a number of local jurisdictions. Therefore, MDT is the only agency able to address

the problems and should have a leadership role. Specific examples that indicate a broader role are: facilitating land use planning at the local and regional level, providing information on public transportation services to both users and providers, supporting local freight needs, and providing design standards conducive to bicycles, and pedestrians and transit for use by local governments.

- **Concern about the overall relationship between transportation and the quality of life.** Many participants asked that MDT make sure that transportation decisions are not made in a vacuum but consider their impact on communities, the quality of life of Montanans, the economy, and the environment. They called for MDT to protect the scenic beauty of the State's major travel corridors, the character of its towns and cities, wildlife, and sensitive areas.

- **Importance of safe transportation facilities.** The safety of highway users, bicyclists and pedestrians is a very important issue for a large majority of participants. MDT should continue to make safety a priority for all transportation users.

- **Recognition of the need for coordinated land use and transportation planning.** Generally, participants at the open houses were conscious of the close relationship between land use and transportation. There is a recognition that MDT affects land use decisions by providing transportation facilities and through access controls to these facilities. Roles suggested for the State include: supporting the efforts of local governments through the provision of appropriate facilities and access controls, providing information to local governments, and coordinating efforts for land use planning on a regional basis.

B. ISSUES BY MODE

Participants raised a number of issues with regard to the different modes of transportation. They are listed below.

1. Highways

- The system is basically complete - with a few exceptions, therefore the focus should be on preservation and maintenance. Most participants at the public meetings felt that Montana has an excellent highway system given its size, population density, and resources. They thought the highway system in the State is basically complete and that MDT should focus on preservation and maintenance.

There was agreement, however, that specific components of the system need capacity improvements. Highway 93 between Kalispell and Missoula, for example, was mentioned at most meetings. The need to pave the gravel road between Terry and Brockway was raised in Miles City. There was discussion of improvements between Great Falls and Billings in both locations but no consensus on the need. Most open houses identified problem intersections or connections within particular urban areas.

- **Need for access management.** Many participants realized the need for better access management and control on major facilities in certain corridors. They cautioned, however, against a statewide policy that does not take regional or corridor differences into consideration. Participants felt that MDT should work with local government to determine the most appropriate approaches for individual corridors and facilities.

- **Prevention of billboard proliferation.** There was a substantial amount of concern about billboard proliferation especially in scenic corridors. There is a belief that there has been an increase in the number and size of billboards and participants wanted MDT to address this problem.

- **Acknowledgement of the needs of tourism.** An increasing reliance on tourism as a major industry in Montana was predicted by many participants. They felt that it is MDT's responsibility to consider this in planning efforts. Issues raised affecting tourism include:

  - Negative impacts from billboards.
  - Lack of rest facilities (People would like to see them within communities rather than outside city limits along the freeway).
  - Signage for attractions and points of interest.
  - Seasonal congestion and safety issues along major tourist routes, especially between Glacier and Yellowstone Parks.
  - Information on location of dump stations for recreational vehicles.

- **Desire for a consistent approach to improvements.** Some participants felt that the decision process for financing improvements to the system is not consistent. They asked MDT to review its approach to making these decisions and ensure consistency across the State.

2. Public Transportation

- **Recognition of the social role of public transportation.** Many participants commented on the continuing increase in the transit-dependent elderly population in the State. In particular, there is an aging population in the rural and small urban areas, and at the same time, a decline in local medical services and shopping, among others. This increases the need for transportation to emerging regional centers that provide these services. Many participants felt strongly that these essential transportation services should be provided where feasible.

- **Concern about lack of coordination between systems.** There was substantial concern about a lack of coordination between the existing local, regional, and intercity systems. Participants see a role for MDT in facilitating coordination and greater efficiency. This could include working to remove existing regulatory barriers to efficient regional services and providing schedule information to the public for all providers.

- **Desire to provide transit-friendly infrastructure.** Participants in the western cities felt that there is a need to meet future transportation demand through increases in transit use. They see a role for MDT and local jurisdictions to provide land use and design guidelines that can facilitate transit use. However, there was strong skepticism about the cost-effectiveness of fixed route systems for moving people.

- **Need to promote public transportation.** Some participants would like to increase public awareness of the environmental and energy benefits of public transportation and asked for more promotion.

- **Concern about the condition of terminals, the lack of intermodal connections and facilities.** There was some concern about the condition of terminals, especially for intercity bus passengers. Participants considered the development of intermodal shared use terminals desirable. Some participants were concerned about the current lack of access to rail and air by public transportation. They felt that the different modes of public transportation should be connected.

- **Relatively little concern about air transportation outside of Northeast Montana.** While a small number of participants were concerned about recent losses of commercial air service, the majority of participants did not raise the level of air transportation service as a critical issue. The participants at the Tribal Government meetings from the Glasgow, Wolf Point, and the Havre

areas were concerned about any potential loss of subsidized service and the high cost of this service.

3. Freight Rail

- **Concern about continued loss of branch rail lines.** The continued loss of freight rail lines is a major concern across the State. Participants felt that in particular long-haul bulk freight belongs on rail rather than trucks. There was agreement that MDT has a responsibility to work with rail operators to keep existing lines viable where possible or at least to ensure that existing public right-of-way is protected.

- **Desire to move freight from truck to rail.** Many participants expressed concern about the size and speed of truck and trailer combinations they encounter on the freeway and their impact on pavement conditions. In many corridors, they saw a conflict between truck and automobile uses. Others pointed to the energy efficiencies and low environmental impacts of rail. All asked MDT to explore ways to facilitate movement of goods by rail rather than truck for these reasons. However, participants recognized that truck movements are the only viable option in many parts of the State.

4. Pedestrian and Bicycle

- **Strong support for incorporating pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the system.** There was a high level of support for making bicycle and pedestrian facilities a consistent component of the State's future transportation system. The priorities expressed were in urban areas and in scenic corridors with high volumes of tourist traffic. Participants want bicycle facilities incorporated into planning for rehabilitation and new projects. There was a recognition that care should be taken to ensure that consideration of bicycle needs in rural areas reflects the low population density and large geographical areas in Montana.

- **Need for agreed approach to design standards.** The participants see a role for MDT to help local governments develop design standards that are conducive to pedestrian and bicycle use in the growing urban areas.

- **Concern that safety is improved.** Participants were concerned about the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. They asked MDT to reconsider some of its design standards, for example the use of rumble strips on state highways, with their safety in mind. Maintenance practices should not adversely impact use of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

C. TRIBAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES

This section provides an overview of the key issues identified by the different tribal governments.

- **Importance of Respecting Tribal Sovereignty**

  The tribal governments emphasized very strongly that they are sovereign governments and that this should be reflected in the planning process. Furthermore, this needs to be reflected in MDT's continuous planning process and STIP development. This is particularly significant given the size of the land area and the number of state facilities crossing the reservations.

- **Need for Improved Interjurisidictional Collaboration**

  In general, the Tribes recognize that there has not been a particularly good working relationship with MDT. However, the planning process and the issue identification work are viewed as a good initiative. They believe that this needs to be translated into meaningful involvement, by developing a plan which reflects tribal concerns in the management of the transportation system.

  In many locations, state owned routes pass through reservation lands. The Tribes would like to be involved in a collaborative process for planning, managing, and funding for these routes. For example, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are concerned about corridor management and safety issues which they want addressed if tribal right-of-way is to be granted for improvements to Highway 93.

- **Need To Address Indian Contract Preferences**

  A number of the Tribes expressed their concern about Indian contract preferences. The Blackfeet Tribe expressed their opinion that it is not possible to establish a collaborative framework for planning and programming until the outstanding disagreements with the MDT concerning Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO) issues are resolved. Their position is that no projects will be built on the reservation until agreements are reached.

I. Introduction

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is preparing the State's first multimodal Transportation Plan (TranPlan 21). This report summarizes the first stage of public involvement efforts and issue identification for TranPlan 21. It is organized into the following sections:

Section I. **Introduction.** This describes the purpose of the initial issue identification and the approach that was taken.

Section II. **Issues From Meetings.** This provides a summary of all issue identification meetings.

Section III. **Tribal Governments' Issues.**This section documents the issues raised by the tribal governments.

Section IV. **Written and Oral Input.** This lists written and oral comments.

Appendix A. **TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Process.** This appendix documents the TranPlan 21 public involvement process.

Appendix B. **Public Involvement Questionnaire.** This appendix includes the questionnaire used to facilitate public involvement and the results.

Appendix C. **List of Written Submissions.**

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the dialogue with citizens and transportation interests in Montana was to identify Montana's most pressing transportation issues and to help determine the priorities for the future of the state's transportation system. In fulfilling a requirement of recent federal transportation legislation, it was designed to give early input and direction to TranPlan 21, Montana's first multimodal transportation plan.

B. APPROACH

To solicit input from citizens and transportation interests and providers, MDT provided a variety of different opportunities for comment. They included:

1. Public Open Houses

A series of six open houses for the general public were held in Butte, Great Falls, Missoula, Kalispell, Billings, and Miles City. The meetings were publicized in the media and through MDT's newsletter. Participants were informed about TranPlan 21

and their role in the planning process through a short 35 millimeter slide presentation which was made twice throughout the four-hour meeting. Discussion in small groups following the presentations provided an opportunity for all participants to voice their concerns about the transportation system and identify current and future needs and opportunities. In addition, a short questionnaire (See Appendix B) allowed participants to individually define their priorities. Compared to the recent MDT experience with the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the meetings were well attended.

2. Statewide Focus/Target Group Meetings

A series of roundtable meetings were held in Helena with representatives of agencies and organizations with specific transportation interests. These included:

- Representatives of Montana's urban areas.
- Freight and intermodal interests.
- Public transportation interests.
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and environmental interests.
- State and federal resource agencies.

Participants at these meetings were invited by mail and through follow-up phone calls for a discussion around their specific interests. The invitation letter for each meeting included a list of topic specific questions to facilitate the discussion. A more detailed 35 millimeter slide presentation informed participants about TranPlan 21. This was followed by a roundtable discussion. To ensure modal balance, selected individuals not able to attend the meeting in Helena were contacted by telephone to provide input.

3. Tribal Meetings

An initial orientation meeting was conducted with representatives of the seven tribal governments in Helena. This was followed by a series of issue identification meetings on each of the reservations. Following the roundtable meeting format, these meetings focused on the transportation planning issues of concern to tribal governments in Montana.

4. TranPlan 21 Hotline and Electronic Bulletin Board

In addition to these meetings, MDT provided a 1-800 number (1-800-714-7296) which has been used by citizens unable to attend the meetings. The hotline will be in operation throughout the development of TranPlan 21 to enable citizens to comment on the plan or request information. In addition, the State Electronic Bulletin Board System (444-5648) was used as a mechanism for citizens to provide input.

5. Written Comment

MDT also received a substantial amount of written comment from transportation interests in the state as documented in Appendix C-1.

II. Issue Identification Meeting Results

This section summarizes comment received during the meetings with citizens and transportation interests and providers. The results are presented in turn from the open house meeting and the focus groups.

A. OPEN HOUSES

This section provides an overview of the issues and concerns identified by the participants of open houses in Butte, Great Falls, Missoula, Kalispell, Miles City, and Billings.

1. *BUTTE* - Open House

Twelve people attended this meeting. They included representatives from vocational rehabilitation services, the chamber of commerce, Butte-Silver Bow's planning department, the contractor's association of Montana, and a legislator. The following issues, concerns, and priorities were identified during the meeting.

a. General Issues

The following provides an overview of the overall concerns and issues that were raised by participants.

- Citizens were concerned that energy prices will not stay at today's low levels. Cars may become too expensive for some in the future. Participants therefore felt that it is important for MDT to prepare for a situation where a higher percentage of the population will depend on public transportation.

- In general, participants felt that there should be more alternatives to the car. However, participants realized that MDT can play only a facilitating role in providing air and public transportation services and that automobile travel is and will continue to be the dominant mode of travel for most Montanans.

- Participants felt that in making transportation decisions, it is important that MDT consider the impact of transportation on the economy. They realized that tourism is likely going to be an important industry in the state. MDT should recognize this for example with regard to signage regulations along freeways and the spacing and location of restrooms.

- The safety of both motorists and users of nonmotorized transportation was of importance to most participants.

b. Summary of Issues by Mode

Participants raised a number of issues with regard to the different modes of transportation. They are listed below.

Highways

- In general, the road and highway system in Montana is in good condition and functioning well, there is no need to change the way MDT is dealing with it.

- The road system in Montana is basically complete - with the exception of a few segments which are sometimes already congested now or will likely be congested in future years. The focus should be on maintenance and preservation rather than system expansion.

- Some participants felt that highway projects should consider the need of tourists. Examples cited were the Highway 93 and Highway 2 corridors. Tourists needs include: rest stops (within communities rather than on the freeway), good signage or even radio information at points of interest, pull-outs at scenic vistas, and recreational vehicle facilities such as dump stations.

Rail

- MDT should work to prevent the loss of additional rail lines and to ensure that the right-of-way of abandoned rail lines does not get lost to the public.

- There was interest in reinstating lost passenger rail service in southern Montana.

Public Transportation

- The most pressing public transportation issue identified is access from cities such as Anaconda to Butte.

- Most participants also thought that the provision of transportation for the elderly and disabled is an issue that should be addressed by TranPlan 21. Current trends show that the population is increasingly older and the

services in those communities declining. Therefore it is going to be increasingly important to provide public transportation access to services in the regional centers.

- While some participants felt that public transportation services should be increased, they also realize that there are severe limitations on the ability of public transportation to address the needs of most citizens in Montana.

Pedestrian and Bicycle

- Some participants requested there should be more provisions for nonmotorized modes. However, MDT should keep in mind the limited role bicycles play in moving people and set funding priorities accordingly.

- One representative of local government expressed concern about the current lag in the availability of funds from the Enhancements program. He felt that MDT should work towards more speedy distribution of the funds.

2. *GREAT FALLS* - Open House

This meeting was attended by 20 people, including representatives of private business, city and county government, state and federal agencies, and a legislator.

a. General Issues

The following provides an overview of the overall concerns and issues that were raised by participants.

- Participants felt that current social trends in the State will change the demands placed on the transportation system during the twenty year period. Smaller communities will likely continue to lose services and facilities such as schools and medical services. Participants expected an increased need for public transportation to regional centers providing medical and other services because of continued increases in the portion of the population that is elderly in these areas.

- There was concern over the decline in intercity public transportation that the State experienced in recent decades. Participants mentioned the loss of air services, passenger rail in the southern part of the State, and deterioration in intercity bus service.

- Some participants expected that there will be a reduction in the importance of resource-based industries in the state that will reduce the need for bulk freight transportation options.

- Some participants suggested that MDT should have a role in dealing with international freight and trade issues. Mentioned was for example promotion of international trade corridors such the Rocky Mountain Trade Corridor.

b. Issues Affecting Local Government

A number of local government representatives were present at this open house. Their comments with regard to issues important to local government are listed below.

- Participants representing local governments felt that MDT's current planning approach provides for an appropriate level of local involvement in the process. There were concerns, however, about a lack of communication and coordination during project development and implementation.

- Local government representatives also thought that there is a role for state government in working towards land use patterns that can be supported by the available (transportation) infrastructure funding. Specifically mentioned were some rural corridors in western Montana, most notably, Highway 93. At the same time, participants felt that land use planning is and should remain in the local domain.

- Some local government representatives expressed concern about the current boundaries of MDT's administrative districts which seem to make adequate consideration of regional traffic patterns and corridors difficult.

c. Summary of Issues by Mode

Participants raised a number of issues with regard to the different modes of transportation. They are listed below.

Highways

- The highway system in Montana has been improved during the last 10 years. Participants felt that MDT has developed a good network for Montana and think that it is generally in good condition.

- Some participants felt that MDT should examine IVHS applications on the highway system to improve safety and tourist information.

- Scenic highways will require more attention in the future when, as expected, tourism becomes increasingly important as an industry for the State.

- There was debate about the need for highway improvements between Great Falls and Billings. Some participants see a need for improvements, others argued that current and foreseeable volumes do not justify it.

Rail

- Some participants were concerned about the loss of rail lines that Montana experienced in recent years. They felt that the state should get involved in dealing with this issue and work to preserve rail corridors for public right-of-way.

- Participants pointed out that truck movements are critical to much of the agriculture and resource-based economy. This is especially so because they compete with rail and keep rates down.

4. *MISSOULA* - Open House

Twenty-nine people attended this open house. The majority of the participants represented local elected officials and staff, or special interests such as environmental and bicycle advocates.

a. General Issues

The following provides an overview of overall concerns and issues that were raised by participants, including: the coordination of transportation and land use planning, transportation pricing and finance, and the role of MDT.

Planning

- Some participants felt that transportation planning should more adequately take the regional consequences of transportation decisions into consideration. For example widening a roadway from two to four lanes impact neighboring communities who may not be planning to increase capacity on the same facility within their boundaries. The communities

need to cooperate to ensure that the regional and not only the local system can function effectively.

- Participants were also concerned about an apparent lack of coordination between land use decisions and transportation planning. They felt that transportation planning should be more proactive, set goals and priorities, for example to support a local community's land use goals, and adhere to them.

- Related to this issue, participants thought that expected population growth in urban areas should be accommodated in a way that supports alternative modes of transportation. This would for example include the provision of design standards that encourage alternative modes of transportation in urban areas and appropriate land use patterns for new development.

- The need to coordinate planning with adjacent states was identified as an important issue.

Transportation Pricing and Finance

- Some participants asked MDT to consider changes to the existing pricing structure for transportation. One person in particular felt that the gas tax should be increased to more adequately cover the cost of transportation.

- In addition to a change in the pricing structure, participants asked MDT to look at more creative and flexible ways of using gas tax funds. This could for example include a reevaluation of current regulations which do not allow use of these funds outside the roadway right-of-way. This was considered a barrier to funding bicycle-only routes.

MDT's Role

- Participants thought that, during the timeframe of TranPlan 21, the role of MDT is bound to broaden to include providing information to local jurisdictions and facilitating the approved solution of transportation problems.

- Participants felt that there is a need for MDT to assist small urban and rural areas with transportation planning at the regional and corridor level.

- Some participants focused on MDT's role in vehicle inspection and maintenance. They felt that MDT should work towards stronger controls

both at the state and federal level to reduce air pollution caused by motor vehicles and unclean fuel.

b. Summary of Issues by Mode

Participants raised a number of issues with regard to the different modes of transportation. They are listed below.

Highways

- Participants felt that MDT should reconsider its current access management and control policies for state facilities and place stronger controls on some highways, for example Highway 93, to increase safety.

- At the same time, participants realized that there is a need for a differentiated approach to access control based on the characteristics of individual corridors. Colorado was mentioned as a good example of this approach. Participants emphasized that good coordination with local governments was important in developing tailored approaches to access control and management.

- Bridge preservation and replacement needs were identified as an important concern.

- There was concern about the rapid increase in the number and size of billboards along state highways, in particular in scenic areas. Participants asked MDT to tighten its billboard controls and noted that some counties have stronger controls than the state.

- Like participants in other cities, participants from the Missoula area felt that the highway system is adequate. They recognized, however, that there is a need for improvements on specific facilities.

Public Transportation

- Participants were concerned that the current approach to public transportation services is not effective. They perceive existing fixed route service as impractical and would like to see demand responsive service and smaller vehicles.

- Some participants also felt that there needs to be more public education about the environmental advantages of using public

transportation. They added that it needs to be more convenient and that future land use patterns should be more conducive to transit.

- There was concern about a lack of intercity bus services in the state. Some participants felt that public dollars should be spent on these services rather than low volume air transportation facilities.

- Several participants commented on current regulatory requirements that restrict regional public transportation services. They asked MDT to work on eliminating these barriers. There was concern that Public Service Commission regulatory requirements are limiting public transportation options.

- Participants felt that with expected growth in population, public transportation in the north/south corridor will become more feasible and asked MDT to look into opportunities for rail in that corridor.

Pedestrian and Bicycle

- Participants thought that MDT should work towards increasing the role of biking and walking in the transportation system.

- One request was that MDT consider the accommodation of biking and walking at the early stages of construction and rehabilitation projects, they should not be an afterthought. It was suggested that the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) bicycle standards be used.

- Participants also requested that MDT revisit its design standards to make sure that facilities are conducive to nonmotorized modes. Mentioned specifically were rumble strips on freeways which are a safety feature for car traffic but hazardous for bicycles. In addition, the state should provide design standards for urban and rural facilities to be used by local jurisdictions.

5. *KALISPELL* - Open House

Thirty-seven people attended this meeting. The majority of the participants represented local government and a variety of different interest groups, including transit, motorcycle, environmental, and community interests.

a. General Issues

The following provides an overview of the overall concerns and issues that were raised by participants.

- Because of their experience with recent growing pains in the Flathead region, participants thought that planning must address the impacts of population growth in western Montana on the transportation system.

- Because of their experience around the issue of Highway 93 many participants felt that there is a need for regional planning with regard to both land use and transportation. They perceive a lack of coordination among local jurisdictions and look to MDT to facilitate and coordinate the planning process at the regional and/or corridor level. This could help economic development by establishing a "managed" tourist corridor.

- One participant even suggested that in areas like the Flathead, MDT should tie the provision of transportation dollars to local communities to the existence of long-range plans.

- Many participants felt strongly that planning needs to stay within environmental bounds. They see Montana's natural environment as an important aspect of quality of life and an economic asset for the growing tourism industry. Of particular concern was the loss of vistas and view sheds in the Highway 93 corridor.

- Participants felt that fuel tax dollars should be spent on transportation and not be diverted to other uses.

- There was concern that the current funding distribution mechanism for transportation projects does not adequately take needs into consideration. Participants felt that the distribution does not reflect needs arising from rapid growth in the western parts of the State.

- Some participants were concerned about the need to preserve corridors, for example, a bypass route for Highway 93 and felt the state and local communities should, if necessary, even use the right of eminent domain to ensure adequate capacity.

- Some participants stated that they came in part to emphasize the importance of public participation in the planning process.

- As in other communities, participants were concerned about the proliferation of billboards along major facilities. Some acknowledged the need to inform the traveling public and stated that at least height and size restrictions should be considered. One person said that Enhancement funds should not be used for removal of billboards.

b. Summary of Issues by Mode

Participants raised a number of issues with regard to the different modes of transportation. They are listed below.

Highways

- All participants agreed that the Highway 93 and the congestion and safety problems in the corridor need to be addressed. Most agreed that improvements are needed, however, not all would like a substantial expansion of the capacity of the facility.

- Several participants indicated that access management for major facilities like Highway 93 is an issue that should be addressed in the planning process.

- As in other communities, participants felt that there was a lack of rest facilities along major freeways. They also suggested that they be located within local communities.

- Greater attention to motorcycle safety was requested.

Rail

- As in other communities, some participants felt that the issue of passenger rail in the western north-south corridor should be explored.

Public Transportation

- Even more than in other communities, participants expressed concern about the need for transportation services from the outlying areas to the regional service centers. Because of the rapid population growth in the area, the elderly have been priced out of the housing market in areas close to these facilities and the local transit system finds it increasingly difficult to serve this particular population.

- Some participants commented on the large numbers of private vans from hotels and resorts picking up customers from air and rail. They suggested that coordination of these services with public transportation may reduce the number of vehicles on the road system and increase efficiencies.

- Participants identified the goal of developing an intermodal public transportation terminal. The facility would be shared between public and private sector transportation providers.

Pedestrian and Bicycle

- Many participants indicated that bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Flathead region should be considered as an essential part of the transportation system. They pointed to both options for commuting and to their importance for the local tourism industry and requested that bicycle planning be on a regional basis to ensure connectivity.

- Some participants requested that pedestrian and bicycle facilities be considered with any future roadway improvements along with landscaping and other visual improvements.

- Representatives of local government expressed concern about the fact that Enhancement funds that would pay for some of these facilities have not been provided yet.

6. *MILES CITY* - Open House

Fourteen people participated in the open house in this city. They included representatives from local government, the business community, and ranchers.

a. General Issues

The following provides an overview of the overall concerns and issues that were raised by participants.

- Some participants were concerned about the fact that some residents drive to neighboring states to shop because they are easier to access than cities in Montana.

- One participant asked MDT to work with the Motor Carriers Association to resolve problems with high diesel fuel prices in the state. Tax revenue

is lost to the state because trucks will cross the state without filling up. He suggested that Montana look into establishing a system similar to that of North Dakota which requires proof of gas purchase within the state for licensing of trucks.

- Participants felt that the current distribution mechanism for roadway funds, based on population, is unfair and asked MDT to reevaluate it. There was also a request for an effort to change current financial district laws.

- Participants felt that economic development needs were stronger than the needs for environmental protection in the eastern part of the State.

b. Summary of Issues by Mode

Participants raised a number of issues with regard to the different modes of transportation. They are listed below.

Highway Issues

- Participants expressed concern that the transportation system in eastern Montana has not changed significantly over the last 10 years. Participants felt that a north/south corridor was needed in eastern Montana. An issue mentioned by several participants was the gravel road between Terry and Brockway which should be paved but has been lacking the necessary funding for quite some time.

- Participants commented that the completion of the Interstate system is a positive aspect of the transportation system.

- It was pointed out that recreational travel is important in eastern Montana. However, lack of direct connections often limits or hinders tourist travel forcing tourists to take detours through the Dakotas to reach locations in Montana.

- There was concern about the inability of some counties to carry out necessary maintenance activities on county roads. Participants suggested that MDT look at swapping maintenance responsibilities to ensure that important facilities can be maintained. An example was to switch frontage road maintenance which is currently performed by the state with that for Highway 253 which is county responsibility.

- The group asked MDT to work on increasing the number of rest areas in eastern Montana. For example, there are no rest stops between Forsyth and Roundup, a distance of over 100 miles. It was suggested that a farmer or rancher could be paid to undertake maintenance.

Public Transportation

- Participants felt that overall eastern Montana has reasonable bus service. However, the frequency of buses and service linking to rail service could be improved. Missing is a good north/south bus connection.

- The lack of access to air terminals from northeast Montana was identified as a significant issue.

- As at other meetings, there was interest in reestablishing AMTRAK's southern route in Montana.

7. *BILLINGS* - Open House

Eighteen people attended the open house in Billings. They represented local government, the business community, freight and bicycle interests, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and a U.S. Senator.

a. General Issues

The following provides an overview of the overall concerns and issues that were raised by participants.

- One participant felt that STIP should consider other existing transportation plans.

- There was concern about air quality problems. MDT was asked to address this issue.

- The participants indicated that the planning analysis should address the allocation of resources statewide. In particular, whether funds shall be disproportionately allocated to regions with relatively low population.

- Participants identified the difficulties counties face in maintaining County roads. There needs to be more coordination between counties off the state-owned system.

- The participants identified a need to coordinate land use and development priority with transportation objectives. One participant, a County Planning Commissioner, identified the need for tools and technical assistance to help improve the permitting decisions that are made and their impact on transportation.

b. Summary of Issues by Mode

Participants raised a number of issues with regard to the different modes of transportation. They are listed below.

Highway Issues

- Participants consider the extent of the road system adequate but would like it to be in better condition.
- Access to recreation areas (lakes) needs to be improved.
- There is a lack of pull outs and rest areas to allow people to enjoy scenic views.
- As at other meetings, participants would like MDT to curb the proliferation of billboards.

Public Transportation

- Public and private transportation infrastructure should be designed to accommodate public transportation, for example through the provision of pull-outs.
- Participants were concerned about the availability and cost of air service. They felt that MDT should get involved in securing service.
- One participant would like rail service on the southern route to be reestablished.
- MDT was asked to work to avoid the public transportation mistakes that have been made on the East Coast.
- Concern was expressed that Montana not repeat the "mistakes made elsewhere". Therefore, planning should address longer range needs for public transportation. Examples cited were public transportation access for new developments.

- A more pedestrian friendly environment was raised as an important issue.

- Concern was expressed about the low and decreasing levels of intercity air service. The high cost and poor service was considered a barrier to economic development. However, the participants were unsure about whether there should be a role for the State in ensuring minimum levels of service.

Pedestrian and Bicycle

- One participant asked MDT to aggressively pursue bicycle and pedestrian issues and to build more facilities.

- Also requested were designated bicycle routes between major urban areas, for example between Bozeman and Billings.

Freight Issues

- Some participants were concerned about truck speeds and asked MDT to reduce the speed limit for trucks.

- In addition, MDT should encourage freight movement to occur on rail rather than trucks.

B. FOCUS/TARGET GROUP MEETINGS

This section summarizes the issues identified by the participants in five focus group meetings held in Helena.

1. Metropolitan and Local Jurisdictions

Ten representatives of metropolitan planning organizations, cities, and counties attended this meeting.

a. General Issues

The following provides an overview of overall concerns and issues that were raised by participants.

Transportation and Land Use Planning

- Participants felt that there was a need for a regional or corridor-level planning mechanism. It was suggested that MDT could take the leadership role through the Districts.

- One participant expressed concern that the TranPlan 21 planning process will cause smaller jurisdictions to lose funds.

- Land use planning was also an issue of concern for most of the group. Participants felt that MDT should work with local governments to facilitate the process in those areas of the state where it is necessary.

- Participants called for access controls on major facilities. One participant felt that current problems exist because of a past lack of access control. MDT has a responsibility to address these issues and should coordinate its efforts with the local communities.

- One participant suggested that the planning approach should ensure that Montana is prepared for a variety of different future development scenarios with different impacts on the transportation system.

- It was also suggested that MDT might provide some ISTEA funds for local and regional planning activities to help local jurisdictions carry out their functions.

b. Coordination with Other Planning Activities

- Participants felt that MDT should make an effort to tie its planning activities into other efforts being carried out in the larger region. This includes, for example, trade corridor issues and the Trail of the Great Bear.

Public Involvement

- Several participants felt strongly that a good public involvement process is essential for successful planning, especially early in the planning process.

- Commitment to public involvement must penetrate all levels of MDT, it should not be limited to the top policy level.

- Public involvement must be recognizable in the plan and be reflected in funding decisions.

Summary of Issues by Mode

Participants raised a number of issues with regard to the different modes of transportation. They are listed below.

Highway Issues

- Most participants felt that the highway system is basically complete. Only a few facilities, for example US-93, need capacity expansion. They would like MDT to focus on maintenance and preservation rather than system expansion.

- One participant pointed out that the most recent infrastructure study, conducted in the mid eighties for the legislature, showed a $50 billion deficit for transportation infrastructure in the state. Participants indicated that the problem has grown since. This means that MDT must develop a clear vision of the system to target funding were it is most needed.

- Participants were particularly concerned about the condition of county roads in the state. They indicated that many of the roads and bridges maintained by the counties are in bad repair and that the system of county roads has not changed in the last ten years. A problem exists in particular for small counties where the main highways are not part of the NHS system since other state and federal funding has decreased in recent years.

- The differences between eastern and western Montana require different planning approaches. In western Montana, Interstate freeways are the most important facilities, whereas eastern Montana is dependent on a functioning system of farm to market roads, many of which are under the jurisdiction of the counties.

- One participant indicated that it is important to start developing other modes now, even at the expense of losing some roadway capacity.

Public Transportation

- Here, as at other meetings, participants expected that the special needs population, elderly and disabled citizens living in rural areas

without necessary services, will grow over the planning horizon. Their needs, transit services from the rural areas to the emerging urban service centers, must be addressed by the plan.

- Considering the relatively low passenger numbers and dispersed land use patterns, participants felt that demand-responsive systems are most likely the most efficient approach to serving this need.

- Participants also felt that more efficient coordination between different systems was needed in some locations.

- One participant stated that many citizens treat public transportation as a tolerated expense. He expected that ridership would continue to be moderate and that the car will remain the mode of choice for most Montanans.

- Participants felt in general that there is a lack of adequate intercity bus service in the state. The system is inefficient, facilities and terminals are in bad shape, and scheduling is often inconvenient. Intercity bus service needs to be better connected to local service.

Passenger Rail

- TranPlan 21 should address passenger rail in the southern east-west corridor and a north-south connection along the Trail of the Great Bear corridor.

- Participants did not, however, want MDT to get involved in the provision of rail service. Rather, its role is seen in ensuring that the state provides an environment that encourages service.

Truck Movement

- An important issue for several participants was that most downtowns were not designed for the large trucks the industry uses, causing safety problems. Specifically mentioned were Kalispell and Missoula.

- Also of concern is the impact on pavement conditions from heavy truck traffic. Participants saw a role for MDT in encouraging freight movement from truck to rail.

- In addition, the state has a role in addressing rail/truck terminal issues. MDT should not, however, spend scarce resources on providing these facilities but rather create an environment that encourages private investment.

2. Intermodal/Freight Focus Group

The purpose of this roundtable discussion was to solicit early input from representatives of various intermodal and freight interests in the state. Eleven persons from various interest groups attended the meeting. The discussion focused mostly on freight rail issues because no representatives from the trucking industry were able to attend the meeting.

a. General Issues

- Participants asked MDT to ensure that the potential impacts of North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on Montana's transportation system are addressed in the plan. There were different opinions, however, with regard to actual effect of the agreement on the state. To the extent possible, MDT should promote economic development in the State through transportation investments, and be poised to take advantage of NAFTA.

- In connection to the potential impact of NAFTA, some participants pointed out that it may not be necessary to look at entire corridors to determine deficiencies. Recent research indicates that it may be more useful to look at specific facilities, such as border crossings, which may constitute a bottleneck. It would be more efficient to work on eliminating these bottlenecks rather than trying to improve entire corridors.

- Participants felt that the Highway Commission's mandate should be changed to that of a Transportation Commission. The Commission has to be knowledgeable about rail, public transportation, and air as well as about highways to provide the appropriate policy guidance for MDT.

- Participants requested that MDT coordinate its work with that of the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture to ensure that it understands the needs of the state's industries. In particular, there should be a person or an office at MDT with knowledge of Interstate Commerce Commission requirements related to the transportation needs of Montana's industry.

- The group also suggested that MDT become more active in informing both state and federal representatives about transportation issues and to lobby to resolve transportation issues both at the state and federal level.

- Participants pointed out that in the past, freight movement in Montana has typically been on the east-west routes. Now freight routes are developing on the north-south routes, too. The state's transportation system, however, is not prepared for that. This includes for example Canadian grain destined for southern locations, impacting the Hiline corridor. The plan must address these issues.

b. MDT's Role in Addressing Freight Issues

- The group recognized that most freight facilities are in the hands of the private sector. It felt very strongly that it would not be appropriate for MDT to own and/or operate facilities in the future. However, there is a facilitator role for MDT. This includes:

  - Planning.
  - Acting as intermediary between carriers.
  - Helping to reduce red tape where possible.
  - Reporting on opportunities for the private sector.
  - Providing information and advice where needed and requested.

Freight Rail

- Participants representing rail interests pointed out that rail is a better option than truck for long-haul bulk commodity shipments. In addition, it creates less environmental damage than truck freight. For those reasons, MDT should get involved in addressing freight rail issues. Suggestions for MDT's role include:

  - Carrying out rail planning in addition to multimodal planning.
  - Possibly subsidizing short and branch lines.
  - Advising and informing on issues related to freight rail, both the freight community and local government.
  - Conducting needs analysis to determine whether branch lines should be changed to short lines.

- Conducting research to find out what is making branch lines unviable and work on eliminating these causes. It was pointed out that this process should begin before abandonment is close, because deferred maintenance creates the need for major improvements to keep lines viable.
- Examining tax relief options for rail. It was pointed out that taxes in Montana are very high and local officials often do not consider all options because school funding is dependent on rail taxes.

- The group asked MDT to consider that private sector rail owners make decisions that increase costs for the public. They indicated that MDT needs to be flexible and provide assistance to the private sector in cases where this is the cheapest option.

- At grade railroad crossings were considered to be continuous problem. Participants wanted MDT to fund separations where they are needed.

- Rail car shortages were considered to be a continuous problem. The group pointed out that 5000 cars are leased to the Canadian railroad every year.

Trucking Issues

- Issues related to trucking mentioned by the group were focused on legal differences between Canada and the United States which put the United States trucking industry at a disadvantage. Participants asked MDT to lobby for removal of these inequities. Issues included:

- United States regulations exempting Canadian configurations from United States restrictions on size and weight while Canada imposes restrictions on American combinations.

- United States regulations exempting Canadian trucks from use taxes on highways.

- United States trucking firms are required to pay worker's compensation on both sides of the border whereas Canadian truckers pay only in Canada.

Public Transportation

- Participants indicated the need for a north-south passenger connection by air, rail, or bus into Canada.

- Some members of the group also pointed to a need for more intercity public transportation in the eastern part of the state. Access from eastern Montana to medical facilities in Billings and other cities in the western part of the state should be provided at least once or twice per week.

- Participants felt that there was a lack of passenger air connections to the West Coast hampering tourism.

- One participant asked MDT to investigate the possibility of school children using the regular public transportation.

4. Public Transportation Focus Group

Eleven persons from public transit agencies, social service agencies, intercity bus, and other passenger transportation interests attended this focus group. MDT also received several written comments from individuals who were invited to this focus group but unable to attend. They are listed in the following sections.

a. Public Education and Information

- One participant indicated that there is a need for public education about the true costs of driving.

- The group also noted a lack of information about current services in the public. Some suggested that MDT should take over the role of information broker and provide information on the services available. It would not only provide information about existing services but also help to tie the different systems together.

b. Role of Public Transportation

- Most participants realized that public transportation is not a viable option for most Montanans. They thought that it is perceived by many as a necessary public expense to provide mobility to the elderly and disabled.

- The group considered access to public transportation a vital necessity for the elderly and handicapped. Like other groups, it pointed to the increasing dispersion of the transit-dependent population and the increasing portion of the population in rural areas that is dependent on transit.

- Participants also felt, however, that MDT should be prepared for transit to take over a larger role in the future when car ownership could become prohibitively expensive for a larger part of the population. However, they

pointed out that it has been very difficult to increase public transportation use. There has been a decline in ridership.

- The group indicated that there might be some areas where increased transit service might be viable and beneficial in increasing mobility. Mentioned as an example was the Flathead region and tourist transportation in the area.

c. Public Transportation Facilities

- One participant pointed out the need for design standards that incorporate transit needs. This could also include land use patterns that are more conducive to transit. There may be a role for MDT in providing information on transit-friendly design standards and land use patterns to local communities to facilitate transit use.

- Representatives of the disabled community would like MDT to become more active in ensuring accessibility of public transportation facilities and vehicles. This includes lifts on fixed-route urban transit, access to bus terminals and bathrooms, and access to regional air transportation which is difficult because the small planes can be boarded only via stairs. A further issue raised was the opening hours of existing bus terminals which tend to be closed during the late evening and night, leaving riders stranded outside.

- Also of concern was dilapidated condition of many bus terminals and the feeling of a lack of safety that they create. Participants suggested that there might be a role for MDT in facilitating or even funding improvements to bus terminals and transit centers.

- Participants suggested that MDT explore the potential of using air terminals as intermodal facilities that could serve as bus terminals. They are in good condition, have ample capacity, and are usually open much longer than bus terminals. This would also provide regional public transportation access to the airports.

d. Public Transportation Funding

- Participants asked MDT to review the current regulations with regard to Section (18) funds. They also called for a review of the criteria used for distribution of Section (18) funds and indicated that some of it might be applied to intercity transportation.

- Participants believe that there are regulatory barriers affecting intrastate public transportation that are adversely impacting public transportation service. MDT will need to work with the Public Service Commission (PSC) to address these.

- One participant pointed out that there are legal problems with charging fares and asked MDT to work to eliminate the barriers to this funding source.

- The representative of the Developmental Disabilities Planning and Advisory Council indicated that his agency might be able to provide some funds for a statewide transit information center.

5. Environmental and Nonmotorized Transportation Focus Group

Six representatives from environmental and nonmotorized transportation interest groups attended this meeting. The issues identified below are supplemented by written comment received from those unable to attend.

a. Public Involvement and Information

- Participants asked MDT to strengthen its public involvement efforts to increase comment. Suggested were the use of television, newspaper articles, and enhanced advertisements that provide people with a connection to their own lives, and small general public focus groups to which people are invited personally.

- There was strong consensus in the group that there is a need for public education about the costs and consequences of business as usual transportation decisions. Participants felt that was part of MDT's responsibility. Participants anticipate that there will be a change in the way people think about transportation. This applies to both the general public and to transportation professionals and community planners alike.

- In connection with the issue of sustainability one participant stated that to address sustainability, public involvement has to be an iterative process; that is defining for the public what sustainable options are and in this way, creating a dialogue about the future.

b. Land Use

- There was consensus in the group that land use is an important issue that has not been addressed adequately in the past. Land use decisions are long

term decisions and therefore need to be made with care. Participants felt that there is a role for the State to facilitate land use patterns that are sustainable on the long run.

c. Sustainability

- One participant suggested that needs-based planning is the wrong approach to planning. He suggested an approach that considers the sustainability of the transportation system. (While he indicated that may not be possible to follow through entirely, it would be an important step to say this is what we can afford and this is what it will look like if we spend the money this way, and this is how it will look like if we spend the money differently.)

d. Changes to the Planning Process

- The group asked MDT to research planning approaches used elsewhere to identify successful and unsuccessful actions.

- The use of pilot projects was also suggested.

- One participant suggested that MDT use the concept of carrying capacity, based on an analysis of the resources that limit expansion of transportation options. These include: land, energy, and funds to determine sustainable options.

- Another participant asked MDT to consider the lifespan of transportation investments rather than a 20 year timeframe. He suggested that 50-100 years would be more appropriate.

e. Trip Reduction Strategies

- Participants suggested a few strategies to reduce the number of single occupant trips. They include:

  - Limiting parking facilities, in particular at schools.
  - Working to eliminate subsidized parking.
  - Reducing speed limits to encourage the use of nonmotorized modes. This would apply in particular in urban areas as an air pollution control measure.
  - Working with other state agencies to increase the use of vanpools.

f. Funding

- Participants suggested that MDT consider least cost planning methods similar to those used in energy planning for transportation decisions. This would include an analysis of both demand and supply side options. TranPlan 21 should consider the costs and potential impacts of transportation decisions if alternatives are not developed.

- There was a request to take a look at changing current laws with regard to the distribution of gas tax funds to allow for innovative transportation projects.

g. Environmental Issues

The group identified several environmental issues to be addressed by MDT. They include:

- Wetland mitigation, one participant would like MDT to make sure that there are no net losses, there should be no "borrowing from the future."

- Water quality protection.

- Air quality mitigation; this should be a consideration in transportation funding decisions. This is particularly important in the Bitterroot area.

- Wildlife impacts; these should receive more attention.

- Visual and scenic impacts; billboards were mentioned as an issue in need of resolution.

h. Pedestrian and Bicycle

- Participants believe there is a need to change the design of roads and bridges to make them safer for nonmotorized transportation. Specific issues to be addressed are the provision of shoulders that are wide enough to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians and a reevaluation of the rumble strips.

- Participants asked for a state policy that would ensure that all new and reconstruction projects include facilities for nonmotorized modes.

- The group requested better signing for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- Participants would like MDT to develop a statewide plan that identifies bike routes across Montana.

- MDT was also asked to better facilitate intermodal connections and opportunities for nonmotorized transportation such as bicycle racks on buses.

- The bicycle facilities at the local level should link high destination areas with trails. The group would like to see paved bicycle paths.

i. Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP)

- Projects should not be excluded from eligibility for CTEP because they are smaller than $10,000.

- The group asked MDT to evaluate whether more than 10 percent of CTEP funds should be spent on Enhancements.

6. State and Federal Resource Agencies Focus Group

Seventeen representatives from state and federal resource agencies attended this meeting.

a. Public Involvement

- Participants, as at other groups, pointed out the importance of providing opportunity for input. They also perceived a need for better public education and communication to aid public involvement.

- The group also felt that there are a number of unresolved issues that are important for the planning process which need to be brought before the public.

- Members of the group also indicated that there is a need for MDT to gain credibility with the public and to demonstrate a commitment to other modes.

b. Funding

- Currently, some projects get funding just because they are ready to go and funds would otherwise lapse. This should, in the opinion of some members of the group, not continue.

- There needs to be a reevaluation of the mechanism for allocating resources. Participants indicated that solutions need to be equitable. The current distribution of funds based on population may not be adequate to address needs.

- Members of the group also pointed to the increasing unwillingness of the public to be taxed to pay the true cost of transportation projects which needs to be considered in the planning process.

c. Planning Process

- Members of the group indicated a desire to see change in the mandate of the Highway Commission to encompass all modes.

- The planning process needs to acknowledge the fact that Montana's economy is changing. Future road needs will be less driven by the natural resource industries than the requirements of the services industries sector.

- Participants indicated that there is a change occurring in what people expect from MDT. People are increasingly concerned with land use and corridor management. The plan needs to reflect these trends.

- Members of the group asked MDT to look into developing regional planning organizations to deal with these and other issues. This would also facilitate coordination with other agencies.

- The plan must also be able to deal with the uncertainty in the planning environment. Members of the group asked what tools could be used to do that.

- The transportation of hazardous materials through the state and its regulations was raised as an issue.

- The plan needs to consider the environment, air quality, wetlands, scenic areas to protect the scenic value and enhance visual aspects of travel in Montana.

- Members of the group urged MDT to address rail issues more proactively. They stated that the department has lost the confidence of the commodity shippers in its ability to adequately deal with these issues. They suggested that the shippers may request that the responsibility is returned to the Department of Agriculture. MDT needs to develop a mechanism that ensures that bulk freight issues are addressed adequately in the plan. This includes establishing the appropriate channels of communication with ICC.

d. Coordination with Other Agencies

- MDT currently has Memoranda of Agreement with other agencies concerning environmental review of projects. Participants agreed that it would be beneficial to expand this beyond the project level. A member of the group suggested that they be changed to include planning.

- The group suggested that state agencies should have a voice in establishing priorities for the plan. This could be achieved through an advisory committee. Group members suggested that MDT coordinate its plans with the goals and plans of other agencies.

- The planning process should define a process to address requests for projects. For example, the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Trail Plan should be able to compete for STIP funding.

- MDT was asked to work with the tourism and recreation agencies to coordinate trails programs and encourage tourism in the less traveled areas of the state. This would include looking for approaches to promote corridors for tourist travel and to identify opportunities for getting tourists off main highways and to attraction sites.

- MDT should also try to work with other agencies to ensure appropriate access to the facilities of other agencies, for example Forest Service roads and to consider the impact of its decisions on these facilities.

- A similar approach was requested with regard to the cultural and historic heritage of the state. MDT facilities can have a negative impact for example on historic town centers. Enhanced cooperation and agreements with other agencies as well as adequate public involvement are needed.

III. Tribal Governments' Issues

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The statewide plan development process was designed to provide tribal governments and their representatives with the opportunity to participate at an early stage. The process included an initial meeting, held in Helena, attended by representatives from most of the tribes (all were invited) and subsequent meetings on each of the seven reservations in the State. In the case of all the meetings, except on the Fort Peck Reservation, input and participation was provided directly by members of the Tribal Council and their staff. Therefore, issues identified in these meetings represent the principal transportation planning concerns of the tribal governments in Montana.

This section describes the results of this early involvement and documents the issues identified during the meetings with the tribal governments and their representatives.

A. OVERVIEW

This section provides an overview of the key issues identified by the different tribal governments.

- **Importance of Respecting Tribal Sovereignty**

  The tribal governments emphasized very strongly that they are sovereign governments and that this should be reflected in the planning process. Furthermore, this needs to be reflected in MDT's continuous planning process and STIP development. This is particularly significant given the size of the land area and the number of state facilities crossing the reservations.

- **Need for Improved Interjurisidictional Collaboration**

  In general, the Tribes recognize that there has not been a particularly good working relationship with MDT. However, the planning process and the issue identification work are viewed as a good initiative. They believe that this needs to be translated into meaningful involvement, by developing a plan which reflects tribal concerns in the management of the transportation system.

  In many locations, state owned routes pass through reservation lands. The Tribes would like to be involved in a collaborative process for planning, managing, and funding for these routes. For example, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are concerned about corridor management and safety issues which they want addressed if tribal right-of-way is to be granted for improvements to Highway 93.

- **Need To Address Indian Contract Preferences**

  A number of the Tribes expressed their concern about Indian contract preferences. The Blackfeet Tribe expressed their opinion that it is not possible to establish a collaborative framework for planning and programming until the outstanding disagreements with the MDT concerning Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO) issues are resolved. Their position is that no projects will be built on the reservation until agreements are reached.

B. THE BLACKFEET RESERVATION, THE BLACKFEET TRIBE

Members of the Blackfeet Tribal Council and their staff raised the following issues:

- **Need To Address Indian Contract Preferences**

  The Tribal Council believes it is not possible to establish a collaborative framework for planning and programming until the outstanding disagreements with the MDT concerning TERO issues are resolved. Their position is that no projects will be built on the reservation until agreements are reached.

- **Need to Respect Tribal Sovereignty**

  There was considerable discussion about the need for the State government, including MDT, to improve its relationship with the Blackfeet Tribe. The participants expressed their concern that the State does not understand that tribal jurisdiction is based on sovereignty.

  The participants suggested that MDT hold an annual transportation summit between the Tribes, MDT, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and counties.

- **Concern About Impacts of International Trade and Tourism**

  The Blackfeet expect that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will have an impact upon their roads. They would like assistance from the MDT to answer the following questions: What is the impact of NAFTA on their Reservation? What will be the impacts of any increased truck volumes on the roads? How will these issues affect BIA funding?

- **Desire to Have Transportation Support Economic Development Goals**

  The Blackfeet are actively involved in pursuing economic development initiatives. The Tribe would like 24-hour operations at the Ports of Piegan and Del Bonita. They expect this would enhance economic development.

- **Desire to Attract and Better Manage Tourist Traffic**

  There is a significant volume of tourist traffic through the Reservation in the summer. There is considerable interest in enhancements such as information and interpretive centers.

  There are conflicts between tourist uses and truck uses for the roads. One suggestion was to try and separate tourist and truck traffic.

- **Concern About Preservation and Maintenance**

  The participants believe that the BIA has insufficient funds for maintaining roads on the Reservation. Winter maintenance (plowing) is especially problematic.

- **Desire for Safety Monitoring and Improvements**

  The participants want information about safety and accidents on the Reservation. There is particular concern about the potential for strong winds to physically blow rail-cars off the rail tracks near Browning.

- **Desire for a General Aviation Airport near Browning**

  The Blackfeet are exploring the feasibility of developing a general aviation airport to serve the Reservation.

- **Need for Improvements to Access Recreation Areas on the Reservation**

  Participants believe that improved access is needed to fishing and boating lakes on the Reservation. Currently, several unimproved roads service the lakes. They are, however, experiencing increased use, and think that a single paved access road may be needed.

C. THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION, CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES

The Tribal Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and their planning staff raised the following issues for consideration in the planning process:

- **Importance of Meaningful Involvement Based On Sovereignty**

  The Confederated Salish and Kootenai should not be treated merely as an interested public organization or a jurisdiction. They are a sovereign government and the public involvement process and the actions of the MDT should be based upon this. The Tribes want to participate but in a meaningful way that results in their issues being addressed.

- **Concern about the Safety and Management of Highway 93**

  The Tribes identified a number of issues that need to be addressed as part of planning for, and management of Highway 93. These include: lowering speed limits in Pablo and Elmo, access management to regulate the number and spacing of approaches, and wider shoulders. They suggested examining parallel routes for moving farm equipment and consideration of providing separate bicycle/pedestrian paths for children and families. The Tribes expect these issues to be addressed if right-of-way is to be granted.

  From the Confederated Salish and Kootenai's perspective, safety is one of the most significant issues in the corridor. Therefore, interim solutions to safety problems should be addressed. Availability of money should not dictate safety improvements because a life is worth more than money. Pedestrian safety is a primary concern and the Tribes suggested that a pedestrian over/underpass would improve safety.

- **Need to Address Tribes' Cultural Concerns**

  The economic and social impacts on Tribes ought to be considered in corridor planning and improvements. Part of this should include provisions for working with Tribes if buried cultural sites are encountered during construction.

- **Desire to Address Cumulative Environmental Impacts**

  The issue was raised regarding the consideration of cumulative environmental effects of improvements on: water quality, wildlife corridor crossings, protection of sensitive plants and wildlife species. The Tribes believe that these should be addressed.

- **Importance of Addressing Indian Contract Preference Issues**

  The Tribe emphasized the importance of resolving the outstanding disagreement between MDT and tribal governments with respect to TERO issues concerning Indian contract preference.

- **Desire to See Tribes Receive Suballocation of Enhancement Monies**

  By dispersing Enhancement monies to counties and not to Reservations, the Tribal Council believes that the sovereignty of Tribal Governments is being ignored. The Tribe wants a direct suballocation of Enhancement monies.

- **Inadequate Funding For Maintenance**

  The Tribal Council considers present funding levels are grossly inadequate for maintaining the existing road system on the Reservation. Poor design and location of many routes requires reconstruction for which funding is also limited.

- **Disagreement with Functional Reclassification**

  In April 1993, the Tribes submitted proposed changes for the reclassification of Reservation roads to the State. The State did not follow many of the Tribes' recommendations when submitting their recommendations to congress. The Tribes would like this reclassification to be reconsidered.

- **Desire for Participation in Priority Setting and Programming**

  The Tribal Council wants to know how their priorities will be addressed in the programming process. They want the opportunity to have input in the final selection process.

- **Desire for Involvement in the Lake County Transit Study**

  The Tribes are interested in being involved in this study. Specific issues they are interested in include: the study of carpooling, vanpooling, bicycle facilities and bus systems.

- **Examine ways to increase commodity movement by rail**

  The MDT could consider alternative modes for transporting commodities such as wood chips which are currently hauled by truck. This could improve safety and help preserve roads.

D. THE CROW RESERVATION, THE CROW TRIBE

The Chair of the Crow Tribal Government and her professional staff identified the following transportation issues:

- **Desire for an Improved Working Relationship with MDT and Direct Suballocation of Funds**

  Clara Nomee, Chair of the Crow Tribe, is eager for improved communication with the State. However, the Tribe will be monitoring the progress of the statewide plan to determine the extent to which their issues are addressed.

  Currently, some state money and services are allocated directly to the counties. The Tribe argues that because 90 percent of Big Horn County's population is on the Crow Reservation, money should be allocated directly to the Reservation and not Big Horn County. The very poor condition of Pryor Road is cited as an example of the need for this approach, in order to ensure adequate maintenance takes place.

  One of the long-range goals of the Tribe is to become more self sufficient. As this happens, the Tribe would like to assume more road responsibilities. To allow this to happen, the Crow want a program developed to train Native Americans to take over road maintenance.

- **Need to Ensure Adequate Infrastructure to Support Economic Development**

  The Crow have embarked on a number of capital investments to improve the economy and provide health services on the Reservation. These include a large casino development and a planned museum. If successful, these will increase infrastructure needs.

- **Concern About the Absence of Passenger Transportation to Billings**

  The participants noted the Powder River bus service crosses, but does not make stops on the Reservation. They believe there is a need for intercity bus service between the Reservation and Billings. This is particularly important for tribal members without access to automobiles who need specialized medical and other services in Billings.

- **Belief that there is a High Priority Need for Airport Development on the Reservation**

  The Tribe received federal funds to build a medical facility to provide specialized medical services to the Native American population in the region. To ensure effective utilization of this facility, emergency air service access is needed. The Federal

Aviation Administration (FAA) recently undertook a study to determine the preferred site for an airstrip within the County. The Tribe has formally objected to the site selection process because it did not include consideration of a site on the Reservation. The Tribe strongly maintains that the FAA should expand the study to consider all potential airport sites. The Tribe believes that in addition to serving the medical facility, location of any new air facility on the Reservation would better serve the population of the area.

- **Concern About Highway Maintenance**

  The Tribe is concerned about the poor condition of many roads on the Reservation. Highway 212 in particular, was noted as being in a bad state of repair and a safety hazard. The poor conditions are exacerbated because all projects on Highway 212 are held up pending resolution of the job preference issues with the State.

  Maintenance on local and county roads is also a problem for the Tribe. There is concern that maintenance simply will not take place. Yellowstone County recently terminated their maintenance agreement for the Pryor Road, and now the Tribe is concerned about who will continue the maintenance program.

- **Desire for Signage Indicating Reservation Borders**

  The Crow would like to place welcome signs at the Reservation borders. They point out that because of tribal sovereignty, they want a sign indicating the Reservation boundary in equal prominence to the "Welcome to Montana" sign, and preferably before that sign.

E. FORT BELKNAP RESERVATION, ASSINIBOINE AND GROS VENTRE TRIBES

Four Tribal Council members and John Healy, the tribal transportation planner, identifiec the following issues:

- **Desire to Access Federal and State Funding**

  The Tribal Council's primary concern is to determine their eligibility for funding projects through existing state and federal funding programs. The tribal transportatior planner pointed out that ISTEA only recognizes the Tribes through the Indiar Reservation Roads (IRR) system for which funding is available through the BIA. The Tribes would like, however, to be eligible for other federal and state funds.

- **Need for Increased Passenger Transportation Services**

  The Tribes would like to see an increase in intra-state air services. In addition, they would like expanded AMTRAK services along the Hiline. The reservation is lacking a reliable bus service to Havre. The Tribes suggested some type of van or shuttle service for the public transportation dependent residents. Transporting the sick and elderly is particularly problematic given their low tolerance for lengthy journeys.

- **Recognition that the Existing Highway System is Adequate**

  The participants believe Montana has an adequate highway system. MDT should concentrate on maintaining the current road network before any additional money is spent on new roads. The Tribes expect to benefit from any upgrading to MT 66 from US 2 to the junction with US 191. This would improve connections to Billings.

- **Expectation of Increased Traffic Due To NAFTA**

  As a result of NAFTA and increased tourism, the Tribes expect there will be an increase in traffic through Fort Belknap. To service existing traffic levels, the Tribes would like to see more rest areas in their region. In addition, they want the existing rest areas maintained during the winter.

- **Desire for Increased Coordination with MDT**

  The Tribal Council suggested working closely with their planning staff to address transportation planning issues. They also suggested MDT involve all tribal planners on a transportation committee. The tribe would like to see increased coordination between their council, the county commissioners and MDT's District Engineer. The Tribes are interested in having Native American representation on the Highway/Transportation Commission.

F. FORT PECK RESERVATION, ASSINIBOINE AND SIOUX TRIBES

No Tribal Council members were present at this meeting. The Tribes were represented by a tribal planner. Local elected officials had been invited to the meeting by the tribes. Two County Commissioners attended the meeting. The issues raised reflect "transportation concerns in northeast Montana".

Following were the issues raised in Wolf Point:

- **Need for Intercity Passenger Transportation Options**

  Wolf Point and other communities in northeast Montana are geographically isolated. At present, intercity transportation options are limited to the automobile and air transportation. Due to the large distances, participants would like to see more reliable and affordable alternatives for travel to Billings, Great Falls and other regional centers. They believe the only feasible option is for intercity bus or van passenger transportation. The need is expected to increase as the population of public transportation dependent residents increases.

- **Interest in the Potential for State Subsidy for Intercity Bus Service**

  The participants would like to see an intercity passenger service connecting Wolf Point with other Montana cities, especially Billings. Given that air service is subsidized, the participants questioned whether it would be possible to subsidize bus service. Subsidies could be given to help operators service smaller communities.

- **Importance of Maintaining Subsidized Air Service to Points in Northeast Montana**

  Participants recognize the importance of commercial-scheduled air service to their communities' economies. For personal travel, it provides a reliable connection, especially in the winter, but for most trips it is prohibitively expensive.

  Some air passengers in the northeast part of the State are travelling to Williston, North Dakota or even Regina to board planes. The Wolf Point community would like to find a way to keep those airport boardings inside the State.

- **Desire for Improved AMTRAK Service**

  The AMTRAK service along the Hiline is important to the region. Currently, Montana has good east/west connections, but the State is still lacking in adequate north/south routes. The participants are concerned that the number of communities with AMTRAK service is declining. Among the suggestions raised was retaining, at a minimum, "flag stops" in communities between the major stations.

- **Concern that the Highway Speed Limit Is Too Low**

  The participants expressed concern that the 55 miles per hour speed limit on the primary and secondary roads in Eastern Montana is too low.

- **Need for Improvements to Highway 2**

  The participants believe that United States Highway 2 (US 2) along the entire Hiline is in a state of disrepair. Construction projects are not keeping up with the needs along this route. Further, they anticipate the demand on US 2 will increase. The development and maintenance of US 2 is considered essential for tourist trade.

- **Importance of a Coordinated Planning Process**

  The participants believe MDT needs to recognize the differences between Tribal Governments in undertaking multijurisdictional planning. It is important to note the Fort Peck Reservation has a "checkerboard" of land ownership patterns, 45 percent of the population on the Reservation is non-Indian and this is different than on other Reservations. Therefore, MDT should work with all of the regional players, the cities, counties, and the tribes as part of a coordinated planning process.

G. NORTHERN CHEYENNE RESERVATION, NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBE

Five representatives from the Tribe, including two council members, attended this meeting. They raised the following issues:

- **Need to Increase Safety**

  The Tribe would like to see an increase in the level of safety on the road system. They believe that a safety-related evaluation of the entire US 212 corridor through the Northern Cheyenne Reservation is needed.

  The Tribe identified several specific safety improvement projects for MDT to undertake. These include:

  - Widening several approaches to improve safety.

  - Providing additional school bus signs along US 212. This is needed because travellers on US 212 often do not expect the school buses to stop.

  - Improving selected intersections, where it was reported that over 20 fatal accidents have occurred, by installing yellow warning lights or a 4-way stop sign.

- **Need to Provide Better Weed Spraying Services**

  The participants believe the State needs to provide a better weed spraying service on US 212 because many of the weeds that were introduced through highway projects along this corridor have spread onto private ranch lands.

- **Concern About Pavement Conditions and Maintenance on US 212**

  The participants believe US 212 is in desperate need of better maintenance. The general disrepair of the road, including the potholes, have become a problem for travellers. The Tribe is also dissatisfied with MDT's winter maintenance program. The reservation roads should be plowed in a more timely fashion. The Tribe suggests MDT hire a tribal member to maintain roads on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. The Tribe would also like the State to repair and better maintain the existing right-of-way fencing along US 212. In addition, because as both the Northern Cheyenne and the State agree that the Reservation is open range, the State needs to take responsibility for maintaining and installing cattle guards on US 212. The Tribe would like better signing along US 212 to mark specific locations and road intersections. For example, they would like a sign at the Muddy Creek intersection and at the Birney/Sheridan intersection.

- **Importance of Improved Passenger Services**

  Currently, there are no intercity bus stops in Lame Deer although intercity services pass through the Reservation. Lame Deer has received Section 16 funding for a van from the State, but there is a need to identify additional mechanisms for serving the transportation dependent.

  The closest airport is in Colstrip (20 miles north). The Reservation needs a fixed-wing airport. Air emergency service is available from Billings, but it is expensive.

- **Desire for Enhanced Interjurisdictional Coordination**

  The Tribal Government would like to better understand how MDT manages the transportation system. It was suggested a brochure or a guide to "using the MDT" would be helpful. The Tribe would like the State to appoint an Indian representative to the Highway/Transportation Commission and other related boards.

- **Concern About Motor Carrier Movements**

  The Tribe would like their own weigh station in Lame Deer. They are looking into purchasing a portable weigh station to patrol the trucks that are using US 212. The

Tribe would like a better understanding of the hazardous materials transported across the Reservation.

- **Desire for a Suballocation of CTEP Funds**

  The Tribal Government representatives believe MDT should have allocated CTEP funds directly to the Reservations, rather than having the Reservations work through the counties. The State should have used the same method to allocate Enhancement funds that are used to allocate funds through the IRR program.

H. ROCKY BOYS RESERVATION, THE CHIPPEWA AND CREE TRIBES

Members of the Chippewa and Cree Tribes' Council raised the following issues:

- **Desire for Policy-level Involvement in TranPlan 21 and the Continuous Planning Process**

  Tribal Council members believe they should participate at a decision-making level in the development of the statewide transportation plan. In particular, the Tribe's goals and priorities should be incorporated in the process. They would like to be notified in advance of Steering Committee meetings.

- **Expect Tribal Sovereignty to be Acknowledged by the Planning Process**

  The planning process should respect sovereignty. Planning and programming processes should not involve Tribal Governments on the same level as local jurisdictions.

- **Desire Funding Mechanisms and the Funding of Improvements on the Reservation to be Addressed**

  The Tribal Council is interested in the potential for Enhancements on the Reservation and the potential for the use of surface transportation program funds. Funds for maintenance on the reservations roads are very limited and used only for emergencies. Consequently there is an acute need for funding.

- **Supporting Economic Development Through Transportation is a Major Priority**

  The Tribal Council explained that many of their economic development concerns are similar to those in adjacent areas, off the Reservation. The Tribes are interested in

any potential for benefitting from increases in international trade as a result of NAFTA.

- **Interested in the Potential For Supporting Economic Development through Tourism**

  In particular, the Tribes believe that there are opportunities for tieing the Native American perspective into tourism development and scenic byways. The tribes have built a lodge and operate a ski area which is a recreational destination with associated transportation needs.

- **Tribal Council Members Questioned Whether Transportation Needs Should Be Put Ahead of Social Needs**

  The Tribal Council questioned whether it reflected the right values to make investments in improved transportation facilities, when many citizens do not have the resources to use the facilities or once they get to service centers to pay for the medical and other services they are seeking. The implication is that basic social needs should be met before improving the transportation system.

- **Identified Special Needs for Connectivity into the State and National Transportation System**

  The Tribal Council pointed out that they are isolated from the major service centers in the State. For access to Billings they are dependent on essential air service from Havre. They are concerned about the future viability of that service.

IV. Written and Oral Comments

In addition to the input from the public meetings, MDT received written comment from thirteen individuals and/or organizations. All were initially invited to a focus group meeting and could not attend or provided written comment in addition to their comments at the meeting. To date there have been 26 calls on the TranPlan 21 hotline.

A. WRITTEN COMMENT

The following summarizes the written comments received.

1. General Comment

- Montana should make an effort to avoid the mistakes of other states and not focus entirely on roadways.(1)
- Montana's demography requires an approach to transportation infrastructure that is different to that of other states.(1)
- A comprehensive inventory of all existing transportation infrastructure is needed to determine the system's most critical weaknesses. This includes passenger and freight transportation facilities and services.(1)
- Work towards improving intermodal connections between public transportation modes.(1)
- It will be difficult to find the funds to maintain Montana's existing transportation system now and in the future.(1)
- Transportation facilities and services in eastern Montana are losing ground. However, there will be little change in the system between now and 2015.(2)
- The distribution of funds between eastern and western Montana does not provide the eastern part of the state with its fair share.(2)
- Safety, in particular the safety of school children, is an important issue that needs to be addressed both in terms of the design of facilities and through education. There is a need for coordination of education programs.(6)
- Consider nonmotorized forms of transportation, including horses.(7,9)

- Protect the wildlife populations in the state and keep their travel corridor functional if necessary through wildlife overpasses or other features.(9)

- Consider the impact of transportation decisions on communities and quality o life.(12)

- The public should be educated about the impacts of transportation decisions.(12

- Provide information on transportation options to the public.(12)

- Whenever federal regulations prevent reasonable solutions to transportatio problems, work with other states and the congressional delegation to remov these barriers.(13)

2. Transportation Planning

- Planning needs to recognize the geographic diversity of the state.(2)

- Use advisory committee structure for decision-making.(7)

- Change current CTEP fund distribution approach. Let a statewide advisor committee distribute the funds and use a portion of the funds for state leve projects.(7)

- Provide access to recreational facilities.(7)

- Consider a 50 year planning horizon.(11)

- Make the organizational structure of MDT accessible and understandable to th public.(11)

- Establish a system of "environmental accounting" to track and publicize MDT' record with regard to wetland, wildlife, and other environmental impacts.(11

- Ensure that all parts of MDT understand and support the new multimoda approach.(12)

- Develop methods for optimizing the trade-off between system improvements an the demand created by them and plan for the appropriate level of demand.(13

- Look at the life-cycle costs of transportation improvements, including thei environmental and energy efficiency, and review current design practices fo appropriateness.(13)

- Place conditions for funding on local communities to increase transportation system efficiency.(13)

- Identify areas in which other agencies affect the transportation system and encourage them to help increase its efficiency.(13)

- Propose a more efficient method for allocating funds across Montana.(13)

- Identify non-construction projects which would facilitate more efficient use of the transportation system.(13)

3. Highway Issues

- MDT should increase capacity only when needed and take a close look at funding for primary and secondary road maintenance costs.(1)

- In rural northeastern Montana the highway system is generally in fair condition. There is adequate access to major highways, although widening of a section of Highway 16 south of Sidney would be desirable.(3)

- Limited funding will make it difficult for MDT to accommodate growth in the western part of the state while maintaining the road system in eastern Montana where it may be necessary to transfer some facilities to local maintenance.(4)

- Highway funds should be distributed fairly throughout the state.(5)

- Work with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks on maintenance and upgrade of state park roads and on adequate signing of state park facilities along highways.(7)

- State roads heavily impacted by cross-border traffic should get more state and federal attention and funds, especially if the traffic does not benefit the area.(8)

4. Public Transportation

- There is not enough coordination of intercity bus and rail service in the state.(1)

- Work to meet the needs of the elderly and disabled in a daily basis.(1)

- Improve passenger rail service to meet some intercity demand with rail.(1)

- Work to improve connections between different public transportation modes and provide information on schedules. Ensure that intermodal passenger facilities with ADA.(1)

- Improve passenger rail service and facilities in the state.(1)

- Promote car pooling and the use of public transportation to improve air quality and reduce dependence on foreign oil.(1)

- There is a lack of access to intercity bus, rail, and air service in the eastern part of the state. However, people who live in this part of the state know that driving long distances to get to any destination is the price for living there.(3)

- MDT should continue its efforts to provide public transportation services to the elderly and disabled, although increased funding will be necessary to meet needs.(3)

- Public transportation in Montana will thrive only if fuel prices rise significantly.(4)

- Eastern and northeastern Montana need some kind of bus service in particular for the elderly.(8)

- Explore joint use of school buses and/or putting school kids on public transportation. Investigate potential changes in legislation which might be required.(8)

- Make public transportation an integral part of the future transportation system. Make it efficient, attractive, and safe.(12)

5. Rail

- Montana is not likely to gain increases in rail service. (4)

- Consider the deteriorating condition of the Canadian rail system in freight movement planning.(8)

- Work on improving the harsh operating environment for rail in the state.(8)

6. Nonmotorized Issues

- MDT should not waste resources to expand bicycle and pedestrian facilities when roadway needs cannot be met.(4)

- Consider the interests of bicyclists in highway planning and promote bicycle trails, lanes, and laws not only for local bicyclists but also for tourist bikers.(10)

7. Air Transportation Issues

- Air service will continue to concentrate at Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, and Missoula airports and the planning process should address highway access improvements to these facilities.(4)

- There is no need to expand general aviation programs or provide additional navigation aid for other airports.(4)

- Explicitly contradicting the above comment, this points out the need to maintain a viable general aviation infrastructure for the state.(5)

- Continued federal funding of essential air service is critical for Montana.(8)

- Work with the Department of Commerce to interest carriers in implementing service to Canadian cities and the West Coast.(8)

8. Funding

- Aviation fuel tax increases given to MDT's Aeronautics Division should, in their lion's share, be returned as grants to the larger airports that have generated them.(4)

- Contradicting the above comment, this statement indicated that the fuel tax was instituted for the express purpose of maintaining expanding general aviation programs. The general aviation community asked for a self-imposed tax to ensure that needed programs can be carried out.(5)

- The general public shows concern for increased taxation.(7)

9. Freight

- Encourage freight from Canada using rail terminals in northern Montana to g on rail closer to the border and try to get a higher portion of the traffic c rail.(8)

- Work to eliminate the unfair advantages of canadian trucks:

  - Work with Alberta and Saskatchewan to get uniform truck standards f Montana and the two provinces.
  - U.S. truckers should not have to pay worker's compensation on both sid of the border if the canadian truckers do not have to.
  - Canadian trucks should pay federal use tax on U.S. highways.
  - Heavier Canadian trucks allowed into Shelby should be limited to or destination - the transloading facility.(8)

- Establish a shipping advocate at MDT. That person would work with the IC and federal agencies and help local shippers in trying to preserve facilities.(8

B. ORAL COMMENTS FROM THE TRANPLAN 21 HOTLINE

1. General Issues

- Consider cooperation with other agencies to address specific issues, e.g. th tourist people.

2. Transportation Planning Issues

- Take a long-range look at transportation needs - use 50 instead of 20 years Take into consideration the linkage between land use and transportatio planning and the fact that current land use patterns are unsustainable and wor towards sustainability.

3. Highway Issues

- One caller was adamantly opposed to the expansion of Highway 93 because i would increase air quality problems.

- Two callers indicated that eastern Montana needs at least one more pave north/south route. Gravel would be acceptable if it is properly maintained. Bot mentioned the Terry-Brockway route as an issue.

4. Public Transportation Issues

- Transit systems should be made more convenient and, at least in the Bitterroot, have park-and-ride lots. There should be provisions to enable people to take bicycles on the bus.

5. Rail Issues

- Consider using rail lines for commuter trains in particular to connect Butte, Anaconda, Deerlodge, Whitehall, and possibly Bozeman.
- Two callers would like the southern passenger rail line reestablished.
- Consider bus access to train stations.

6. Air Transportation Issues

- Establish a system of heliports.

7. Nonmotorized Transportation Issues

- Consider bicycle paths along highways, in particular along Highway 12 and from Great Falls to Helena.
- Consider changes to the pedestrian crossings policy on federal-aid highways in downtown Bozeman.
- Consider bicycle accommodation at the outset of projects and not as an expensive add-on.

8. Funding

- Charge bicyclists for use of highways.
- Eastern Montana does not get its fair share of transportation funds.
- MDT should lobby the legislature to secure highway trust fund monies for transportation. Diversions/borrowing from the fund should stop.

Appendix A

Public Involvement Process Documentation

Public Involvement Process Documentation

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The following documents the public involvement process for TranPlan 21, Montana's first statewide multimodal transportation plan. The public involvement process has four elements:

Stage 1: Issue Identification. This provides the opportunity for early input to identify the issues to be addressed by the plan.

Stage 2: Review and Comment on Alternative Strategies and Actions. This involves enabling the public to evaluate alternative strategies and actions.

Stage 3: Comment on the Draft of the Plan. This provides information and opportunity for public input on the draft plan.

Ongoing: On-going Public Information Activities and Opportunities for Comment. This includes a variety of different mechanisms. These allow for public input and comment throughout the development of the plan, including presentations to local community groups and organizations.

A. MDT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GOALS

MDT's public involvement process provides citizens, affected providers of transportation, and other interested parties, with the opportunity to comment during early stages and later key stages of the plan's development. This includes special consideration to coordinating with the three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula) and the concerns of local governments and the seven Indian tribal governments with sovereignty over lands in Montana (Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Fort Peck Tribes, Blackfeet, Rocky Boy Tribes, Fort Belknap, and Confederated Salish and Kootenai).

The goal for this process is to support the initial development of Montana's long-range, multimodal, statewide transportation plan.

MDT believes effective public involvement at the planning level reduces the potential for future controversy and ultimately results in a better statewide transportation system. Through this public involvement process the MDT is committed to:

- Supply the public and stakeholder groups with timely information to encourag informed discussion on issues and options.
- Providing adequate opportunity for input at key stages in the plan's developmen
- Honest consideration of all input in the decision-making process.

B. STAGE I: PUBLIC INPUT INTO ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

This component of the public involvement process provides the early opportunity fc broad-based input for TranPlan 21 to identify transportation issues to be addressed by th plan. The issue involved the following activities:

1. Public Open Houses

A public open house was held in each of the MDT districts, with an additiona meeting in District 1:

District	City	Location	Date
District 1	Missoula	City Hall	1/25/9
District 2	Kalispell	City Hall	1/26/9
District 3	Butte	B-SB Public Library	1/18/9
District 4	Great Falls	Civic Center	1/19/9
District 5	Miles City	Miles Community College	2/8/9
District 6	Billings	Yellowstone County Courthouse	2/10/9

Each meeting was held between 3:00 and 7:00 p.m. to allow for afternoon an evening attendance. The meetings were publicized in the media and throug MDT's newsletter. Advertisements were placed in the following newspapers:

Newspaper	Publication Dates
Billings Gazette	2/6/94 and 2/10/94
Helena Independent Record	1/16/94 and 1/18/94
Missoulian	1/23/94 and 1/25/94
Kalispell Daily Interlake	1/23/94 and 1/25/94
Great Falls Tribune	1/16/94 and 1/19/94
Montana Standard	1/16/94 and 1/18/94
Miles City Star	2/4/94 and 2/7/94
Bozeman Daily Chronicle	1/16/94 and 1/17/94
Livingston Enterprize	1/17/94
Farm & Ranch	2/2/94

Press releases were sent to the following:

RADIO	NEWSPAPERS
Bozeman	Billings
Helena	Glendive
Butte	Miles City
Great Falls	Kalispell
Kalispell	Missoula
Missoula	Great Falls
Glendive	Butte
Miles City	Helena
Billings	Bozeman
	Livingston

Participants were informed about TranPlan 21 and their role in the planning process through a short slide presentation which was held twice throughout the four-hour meeting. The slides were supplemented through a series of boards illustrating the planning process. Roundtable discussions in small groups following the presentations provided an opportunity for all participants to voice their concerns about the transportation system and perceived current and future needs and opportunities. In addition, a short questionnaire allowed participants to identify their priorities for all modes.

2. Statewide Focus/Target Group Meetings

A series of focus group meetings with representatives of agencies and organizations with specific transportation interests included representatives of:

- Metropolitan Planning Organizations and urban areas.
- Commercial trucking, freight rail, air freight, and intermodal interests.
- Passenger rail, air, and transit interests, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- Bicycle and pedestrian interests and environmental organizations.
- State and federal resource agencies, including but not limited to the Departments of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; Natural Resources and Conservation; State Lands; Historic Preservation; Commerce; the Forest Service; Environmental Protection Agency; Corps of Engineers; and the Federal Highway Administration.

Participants for these meetings were invited by mail and through follow-up phon calls. The invitation letter included a list of key issues related to each interest are designed to facilitate the discussion. A more detailed slide show informe participants about TranPlan 21 and federal planning requirements reflected in th new planning process. This was followed by a roundtable discussion.

3. Tribal Meetings

All tribal governments are being provided with the opportunity to participate i the planning process. Meetings have been scheduled with representatives of th seven tribal governments on each of the reservations. An initial presentation wa provided at a meeting involving all the tribes. Following the roundtable meetin format, they focus on issues particular to the tribal lands in the state.

4. Media Releases

In addition to advertisements announcing the public open houses, press and radi releases were prepared and distributed across the state. MDT staff gave on radio and TV interview at one of the open houses.

5. Other Opportunities for Early Input

In addition to these activities carried out, the public had access to on-goin information and comment opportunities by phone and mail.

C. STAGE 2: REVIEW AND COMMENT ON ALTERNATIV STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

A second round of public meetings will be conducted to enable the public to evaluat alternative strategies and actions designed to address the issues that were identified durin the initial public involvement process. The public will be able to review and commer on different sets of strategies and actions that set alternative priorities for TranPlan 2 and identify those that should be considered in the preparation of the plan. The publi will also have the opportunity to review and comment on different types of publi involvement measures that could be used in the future as part of the continuous plannin process.

At a minimum, there will be:

- A series of six open houses in the same communities where meetings were held during Stage 1, plus three additional locations (Helena, Glasgow and Havre).
- A series of six focus group meetings involving the same groups of transportation interests as those in Stage 1.
- A series of meetings with representatives from each tribal government.
- Opportunities to review and comment by telephone and mail.
- A statistically significant (at the 95 percent confidence level) survey of Montanans to solicit comment on the potential policy recommendations.

D. STAGE 3: COMMENT ON THE DRAFT PLAN

The goal of this public involvement effort will be to inform the public about the draft transportation plan and to provide opportunity for comment on the plan. The draft will be made available early enough to allow for an adequate review and comment period and consideration of these comments in the final plan.

At a minimum, the following public involvement activities will be carried out:

- Opportunities to review and comment by mail and telephone.
- Individuals and organizations on the TranPlan 21 mailing list will be notified that the plan is available for review and comment.
- Copies of the overview of the draft plan will be distributed to: all individuals and organizations that participated in or were invited to the focus group meetings and anyone else requesting the document.
- Copies of the draft plan overview will be distributed to public libraries.
- Newspaper ads will be placed in major newspapers announcing the availability of the plan.

E. ONGOING PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENT

TranPlan 21's public involvement includes a variety of ongoing mechanisms for public input. This section describes the sources of information and opportunities for comment available to the public throughout the development of TranPlan 21.

1. TranPlan 21 Hotline

The hotline, 1-800-714-7296, is in operation throughout the development of TranPlan 21. Its purpose is to enable citizens to comment on the plan or MDT activities in general or to request information on the plan.

2. Statewide MDT Newsletter Inserts

In time before the first round of public meetings, MDT sent out the first issue of its newsletter, *Newsline*. The newsletter will be published throughout the planning process and is designed to inform and educate the public about planning activities and opportunities for involvement and to solicit comment. Currently, MDT's mailing list includes more than 3500 names, representing all modes, all levels of state and local government, various transportation, economic, social, and environmental interests. Participants of all public open houses could request to be added to the mailing list.

3. Electronic Bulletin Board

MDT's special studies section will monitor the state's electronic bulletin board for transportation planning issues and inquiries and respond as appropriate. The telephone number is 444-5648.

4. News Releases

In addition to the information made available to press and radio stations before the first round of public meetings, there will be news releases at strategic stages of the development of TranPlan 21. At a minimum, the media will be briefed about different strategies and actions for TranPlan 21 and the draft of the plan and its availability for public comment.

F. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TEAM

Following MDT staff and consultants undertook the public involvement:

• John Craig	Chief Multimodal Planning Bureau
• William Cloud	Supervisor, Special Studies Section
• Lisa Moisey	Planner, Special Studies Section
• William Dye	President, Dye Management Group, Inc.
• David Rose	Senior Manager, Dye Management Group, Inc.
• Christine Wolf	Senior Consultant, Dye Management Group, Inc.

Appendix B

Public Involvement Questionnaire Results

Summary of Open Houses
Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following transportation issues?

N = 103*

ıses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
ıbility to use modes other than the car	51	24	20	1		3
osts of moving goods and people	35	51	14			
ffect of different types of transportation n energy consumption	42	37	17	2		2
ffect transportation choices have on ɔmmunities and community concerns	50	33	15	1		2
onsidering adequate access to transpor-ıtion for everybody throughout Montana	34	37	21	2	2	4
mpact of population decline in eastern Iontana	17	17	43	15	7	2
mpact of population growth in western Iontana	52	21	20	2	1	3
mpact transportation has on the conomy	52	30	11	1	1	5
mpact of transportation choices on the nvironment	47	40	10	2	1	1
mpacts of tourism on the transportation ystem	44	29	23		2	2
Ieed for new funding sources for ransportation	37	37	19	1	3	3
afety of transportation users	58	32	9			1
)ther						
.						
.						
.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Summary of Open Houses *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following highway issues?

N = 103*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	Answer
- Build new roads	12	22	39	22	1	
- Good access to freeway ramps	15	35	33	14	1	
- Good signage	28	46	20	1		
- Pave more roads	22	21	36	17		
- Prevent and fix potholes	41	44	13			
- Prevent congestion	38	39	15	4		
- Prevent/clean up litter	23	43	31	1		
- Safety	71	25	3			
- Speedy snow removal	26	49	17	5		
- Use technology to allow better use of existing roadways	44	38	11	2	2	
- Well-spaced and clean freeway rest areas	26	28	36	7		
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Summary of Open Houses *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following pedestrian/bicycle facilities issues?

N = 103*

sonses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Adding new bicycle/pedestrian paths	44	24	18	9	4	1
Aesthetically pleasing pedestrian/bicycle paths for recreation in urban areas	31	29	25	9	4	2
Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas ON major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	22	25	27	17	2	7
Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas SEPARATED from major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	39	21	26	8	3	3
Preservation and use of abandoned rail lines for trails	37	28	25	8		2
Paths along major freeways	18	22	28	23	3	5
Recreational trails in rural areas	17	30	36	14	2	1
Safety of bicyclists, pedestrians	64	24	8	2		2
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Summary of Open Houses *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following public transportation issues?

N = 103*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	Ar
- Bus service in rural areas	24	36	26	13		
- Bus service to rail	24	34	29	11	1	
- Coordinate schedules for easy transfers	31	37	21	7	1	
- Encourage ridesharing	33	38	20	6		
- Expand transit service	37	29	25	5	1	
- Improve bus terminals	18	37	30	9	2	
- Service between cities in Montana	34	43	17	5		
- Service for the elderly/disabled	56	32	10	1		
- Transit in urban areas	50	25	15	6	1	
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Summary of Open Houses *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following air transportation issues?

N = 103*

onses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Bus service to airports with commercial service	28	38	17	13	1	4
Good road access to airports	27	46	20	4		3
More general aviation airports	5	13	42	30	4	7
Regular service to other parts of the country	33	44	17	4		2
Regular service between Montana's cities	29	44	19	5		3
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Butte Open House

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following transportation issues?

N = 10*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %
- Ability to use modes other than the car	50	30	20		
- Costs of moving goods and people	20	60	20		
- Effect of different types of transportation on energy consumption	50	20	20	10	
- Effect transportation choices have on communities and community concerns	40	40	20		
- Considering adequate access to transportation for everybody throughout Montana	40	40	20		
- Impact of population decline in eastern Montana		10	60	20	10
- Impact of population growth in western Montana	40	20	30		
- Impact transportation has on the economy	80	10	10		
- Impact of transportation choices on the environment	20	60	20		
- Impacts of tourism on the transportation system	60	20	20		
- Need for new funding sources for transportation	20	60			10
- Safety of transportation users	40	30	30		
- Other					
1.					
2.					
3.					

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Butte Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following highway issues?

N = 10*

nses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Build new roads	10	10	30	20	10	20
Good access to freeway ramps	30	40	10	10		10
Good signage	60	10	10	10		10
Pave more roads	10	30	30	20		10
Prevent and fix potholes	40	30	20			10
Prevent congestion	30	40	10	10		10
Prevent/clean up litter	40	30	20			10
Safety	60	20	10			10
Speedy snow removal	20	50	10	10		10
Use technology to allow better use of existing roadways	20	40	20			20
Well-spaced and clean freeway rest areas	20	40	20	10		10
Other						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Butte Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following pedestrian/bicycle facilities issues

N = 10*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No %
- Adding new bicycle/pedestrian paths	30	30	40			
- Aesthetically pleasing pedestrian/bicycle paths for recreation in urban areas		30	70			
- Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas ON major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	20	10	60	10		
- Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas SEPARATED from major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	30	10	50		10	
- Preservation and use of abandoned rail lines for trails	40	40	20			
- Paths along major freeways	10	20	30	40		
- Recreational trails in rural areas	10	30	30	30		
- Safety of bicyclists, pedestrians	60	20	20			
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Butte Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following public transportation issues?

N = 10*

ponses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Bus service in rural areas	30	20	30	10		10
Bus service to rail	20	30	30	10		10
Coordinate schedules for easy transfers	10	40	50			
Encourage ridesharing	10	40	30	10		10
Expand transit service	30	10	50		10	
Improve bus terminals	30	40	20	10		
Service between cities in Montana	40	30	30			
Service for the elderly/disabled	60	30	10			
Transit in urban areas	30	40	20	10		
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Butte Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following air transportation issues?

N = 10*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer
- Bus service to airports with commercial service	20	40	10	20		
- Good road access to airports	30	50	10			
- More general aviation airports	10	10	50	10		
- Regular service to other parts of the country	40	40	20			
- Regular service between Montana's cities	30	50	10			
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Great Falls Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following pedestrian/bicycle facilities issues?

N = 17*

ponses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Adding new bicycle/pedestrian paths	18	35	29	18		
Aesthetically pleasing pedestrian/bicycle paths for recreation in urban areas	18	47	24	12		
Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas ON major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls		24	41	35		
Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas SEPARATED from major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	29	24	29	18		
Preservation and use of abandoned rail lines for trails	12	29	53	6		
Paths along major freeways	6	24	35	35		
Recreational trails in rural areas	6	18	53	24		
Safety of bicyclists, pedestrians	41	53	6			
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Great Falls Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following public transportation issues?

N = 17*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Sw %
- Bus service in rural areas		59	29	12		
- Bus service to rail	12	24	35	29		
- Coordinate schedules for easy transfers	24	24	35	18		
- Encourage ridesharing	12	53	24	12		
- Expand transit service	24	24	35	18		
- Improve bus terminals	41	41	18			
- Service between cities in Montana	24	53	12	12		
- Service for the elderly/disabled	41	41	12	6		
- Transit in urban areas	35	29	24	12		
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Great Falls Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following air transportation issues?

N = 17*

onses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Bus service to airports with commercial service	18	24	29	29		
Good road access to airports	18	53	24	6		
More general aviation airports		24	41	29	6	
Regular service to other parts of the country	18	71	12			
Regular service between Montana's cities	12	53	35			
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Missoula Open House

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following transportation issues?

N = 24*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	N
- Ability to use modes other than the car	88	8	4			
- Costs of moving goods and people	25	46	29			
- Effect of different types of transportation on energy consumption	54	38	8			
- Effect transportation choices have on communities and community concerns	54	38	8			
- Considering adequate access to transportation for everybody throughout Montana	42	29	21		8	
- Impact of population decline in eastern Montana	13	17	38	13	17	4
- Impact of population growth in western Montana	75	13	13			
- Impact transportation has on the economy	42	33	17	4		4
- Impact of transportation choices on the environment	67	29	4			
- Impacts of tourism on the transportation system	38	33	29			
- Need for new funding sources for transportation	38	38	21	4		
- Safety of transportation users	63	33	4			
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Missoula Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following highway issues?

N = 24*

pnses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Build new roads	4	17	46	33		
Good access to freeway ramps	8	29	38	21	4	
Good signage	17	46	33			4
Pave more roads	17	17	46	21		
Prevent and fix potholes	29	54	17			
Prevent congestion	54	33	4	4		4
Prevent/clean up litter	17	42	38	4		
afety	58	38	4			
peedy snow removal	33	33	25	8		
Use technology to allow better se of existing roadways	50	33	4	4	4	4
Well-spaced and clean freeway est areas	25	13	58	4		
Other						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Missoula Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following pedestrian/bicycle facilities issues

N = 24*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	%
- Adding new bicycle/pedestrian paths	63	29	4		4	
- Aesthetically pleasing pedestrian/bicycle paths for recreation in urban areas	25	42	17	13		4
- Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas ON major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	33	38	4	13		3
- Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas SEPARATED from major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	38	21	33	4		4
- Preservation and use of abandoned rail lines for trails	58	21	21			
- Paths along major freeways	29	29	17	17	4	4
- Recreational trails in rural areas	13	38	50			
- Safety of bicyclists, pedestrians	79	17	4			
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Missoula Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following public transportation issues?

N = 24*

onses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Bus service in rural areas	46	33	13	8		
Bus service to rail	46	38	13	4		
Coordinate schedules for easy transfers	63	33	4			
Encourage ridesharing	58	38	4			
Expand transit service	71	21	8			
Improve bus terminals	29	46	21			4
Service between cities in Montana	46	42	4	4		4
Service for the elderly/disabled	71	21	8			
Transit in urban areas	79	17		4		
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Missoula Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following air transportation issues?

N = 24*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
- Bus service to airports with commercial service	38	50	4	4		
- Good road access to airports	17	38	38	4		
- More general aviation airports	4	8	42	42		
- Regular service to other parts of the country	29	33	29	4		
- Regular service between Montana's cities	33	29	21	13		
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Kalispell Open House

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following transportation issues?

N = 28*

onses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
bility to use modes other than the car	50	32	14			4
osts of moving goods and people	32	61	7			
ffect of different types of transportation n energy consumption	32	46	21			
ffect transportation choices have on ommunities and community concerns	57	18	21			4
onsidering adequate access to transpor-tion for everybody throughout Montana	29	39	21	4		7
npact of population decline in eastern lontana	11	21	50	18		
npact of population growth in western lontana	86	14				
npact transportation has on the economy	43	36	14			7
npact of transportation choices on the nvironment	54	43	4			
npacts of tourism on the transportation ystem	57	21	14			7
eed for new funding sources for ansportation	39	32	25		4	
afety of transportation users	64	21	14			
ther						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Kalispell Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following highway issues?

N = 28*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	A we %
- Build new roads	25	21	25	21		
- Good access to freeway ramps	18	32	29	21		
- Good signage	36	43	18			
- Pave more roads	25	21	39	11		
- Prevent and fix potholes	43	46	11			
- Prevent congestion	54	29	11	4		
- Prevent/clean up litter	39	39	21			
- Safety	82	18				
- Speedy snow removal	32	57	7	4		
- Use technology to allow better use of existing roadways	54	43	4			
- Well-spaced and clean freeway rest areas	29	32	25	11		
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Kalispell Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following pedestrian/bicycle facilities issues?

N = 28*

ponses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Adding new bicycle/pedestrian paths	75	14	11			
Aesthetically pleasing pedestrian/bicycle paths for recreation in urban areas	68	14	14	4		
Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas ON major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	36	29	21	7		7
Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas SEPARATED from major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	68	11	21			
Preservation and use of abandoned rail lines for trails	50	39	7	4		
Paths along major freeways	29	32	29	4	4	4
Recreational trails in rural areas	36	36	29			
Safety of bicyclists, pedestrians	82	11	7			
Other						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Kalispell Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following public transportation issues?

N = 28*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	A
- Bus service in rural areas	25	32	29	14		
- Bus service to rail	25	46	25	4		
- Coordinate schedules for easy transfers	32	46	11	7		
- Encourage ridesharing	39	32	21	7		
- Expand transit service	39	32	25			
- Improve bus terminals	21	39	25	7		
- Service between cities in Montana	39	50	11			
- Service for the elderly/disabled	64	18	14			
- Transit in urban areas	54	32	11			
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Kalispell Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following air transportation issues?

N = 28*

nses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Bus service to airports with commercial service	36	50	11	4		
Good road access to airports	29	61	7	4		
More general aviation airports	11	7	50	25	4	4
Regular service to other parts of the country	36	46	11	7		
Regular service between Montana's cities	32	54	11	4		
Other						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Miles City Open House

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following transportation issues?

N = 11*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer
- Ability to use modes other than the car	9	27	55			
- Costs of moving goods and people	55	36	9			
- Effect of different types of transportation on energy consumption	9	36	36			1
- Effect transportation choices have on communities and community concerns	55	18	18			
- Considering adequate access to transportation for everybody throughout Montana	64	27	9			
- Impact of population decline in eastern Montana	82	9	9			
- Impact of population growth in western Montana		27	55			1
- Impact transportation has on the economy	73	9			9	
- Impact of transportation choices on the environment	18	18	36	9	9	
- Impacts of tourism on the transportation system	64	9	18		9	
- Need for new funding sources for transportation	55	36				9
- Safety of transportation users	55	36				9
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Miles City Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following highway issues?

N = 11*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Build new roads	18	36	27	18		
Good access to freeway ramps	9	45	27			18
Good signage	18	45	18			18
Pave more roads	91		9			
Prevent and fix potholes	64	18				18
Prevent congestion	9	55	18			18
Prevent/clean up litter		45	45			9
Safety	82	18				
Speedy snow removal	9	73	9			9
Use technology to allow better use of existing roadways	36	45	9			9
Well-spaced and clean freeway rest areas	9	36	45			9
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Miles City Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following pedestrian/bicycle facilities issues?

N = 11*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	Ar
- Adding new bicycle/pedestrian paths		9	36	27	18	
- Aesthetically pleasing pedestrian/bicycle paths for recreation in urban areas		9	36	18	27	
- Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas ON major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls		18	36	9	18	1
- Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas SEPARATED from major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	9	27	9	18	18	1
- Preservation and use of abandoned rail lines for trails		9	36	36		1
- Paths along major freeways		9	27	45		1
- Recreational trails in rural areas		18	27	36	9	9
- Safety of bicyclists, pedestrians	27	27	9	18		18
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Miles City Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following public transportation issues?

N = 11*

ponses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Bus service in rural areas	27	45	27			
Bus service to rail	18	45	36			
Coordinate schedules for easy transfers	9	45	27			18
Encourage ridesharing	9	36	36			18
Expand transit service	9	36				18
Improve bus terminals	9	27	36	9	9	9
Service between cities in Montana	27	36	36			
Service for the elderly/disabled	45	45	9			
Transit in urban areas	9	9	45	9	9	18
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Miles City Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following air transportation issues?

N = 11*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	A
- Bus service to airports with commercial service	18	27	36	9		
- Good road access to airports	36	36	18	9		
- More general aviation airports		18	36	27		
- Regular service to other parts of the country	36	36	18	9		
- Regular service between Montana's cities	36	36	18	9		
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Billings Open House

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following transportation issues?

N = 13*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Ability to use modes other than the car	54	8	31			8
Costs of moving goods and people	38	54	8			
Effect of different types of transportation on energy consumption	62	23	15			
Effect transportation choices have on communities and community concerns	54	31	15			
Considering adequate access to transportation for everybody throughout Montana	8	62	31			
Impact of population decline in eastern Montana	8	8	38	38	8	
Impact of population growth in western Montana	23	31	31	8	8	
Impact transportation has on the economy	62	23	15			
Impact of transportation choices on the environment	46	46	8			
Impacts of tourism on the transportation system	23	46	23		8	
Need for new funding sources for transportation	38	23	38			
Safety of transportation users	77	23				
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Billings Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following highway issues?

N = 13*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	A w
- Build new roads	8	8	54	31		
- Good access to freeway ramps	23	31	46			
- Good signage	31	54	15			
- Pave more roads	8	15	38	38		
- Prevent and fix potholes	46	31	23			
- Prevent congestion	46	46	8			
- Prevent/clean up litter	23	62	15			
- Safety	85	15				
- Speedy snow removal	23	38	23	8		
- Use technology to allow better use of existing roadways	46	23	23		8	
- Well-spaced and clean freeway rest areas	46	15	23	15		
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Billings Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following pedestrian/bicycle facilities issues?

N = 13*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Adding new bicycle/pedestrian paths	23	31	15	23	8	
Aesthetically pleasing pedestrian/bicycle paths for recreation in urban areas	31	31	23	8	8	
Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas ON major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	23	15	31	31		
Direct pedestrian/bicycle paths in urban areas SEPARATED from major roads for commuting and to activity centers like schools and malls	23	46	15	15		
Preservation and use of abandoned rail lines for trails	31	23	31	15		
Paths along major freeways	15		38	31	8	8
Recreational trails in rural areas	23	31	15	23	8	
Safety of bicyclists, pedestrians	62	31	8			
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Billings Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following public transportation issues?

N = 13*

Responses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer
- Bus service in rural areas	8	23	38	31		
- Bus service to rail	8	8	54	23	8	
- Coordinate schedules for easy transfers	15	31	31	15	8	
- Encourage ridesharing	38	31	23	8		
- Expand transit service	15	54	15	15		
- Improve bus terminals	15	15	46	15	8	
- Service between cities in Montana	15	31	38	15		
- Service for the elderly/disabled	38	62				
- Transit in urban areas	62	23	8	8		
- Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Billings Open House *(continued)*

Questionnaire Responses

How important are the following air transportation issues?

N = 13*

ponses in Percent**	Very Important %	Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %	No Answer %
Bus service to airports with commercial service	23	15	23	23	8	8
Good road access to airports	46	23	23			8
More general aviation airports		15	23	38	15	8
Regular service to other parts of the country	46	31	15			8
Regular service between Montana's cities	31	38	23			8
Other						
1.						
2.						
3.						

* Note: Not all participants completed a questionnaire.
** Note: Percentages in row may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Appendix C

Written Comment

■

Written Comment

1) National Association of Railroad Passengers, letters from Mr. Robert Stevens and Mr. Barry Green

   Submissions:

   - A Public Transportation Mission Proposal for the Montana Department of Transportation, dated 11/25/92 (The memo was originally sent to Governor Racicot shortly after he was elected. Mr. Stevens considers it still relevant.)
   - Get America on Track, a publication by the Campaign for New Transportation Priorities, a project of the National Association of Railroad Passengers
   - Executive Summary of the Phased Implementation Program Plan for the Railroad Passenger Service Improvement in the State of Washington, prepared for the National Association of Railroad Passengers by Washington ARP, Rail Planning Committee

2) Fergus County Council on Aging, letter from Mr. Willy Rimby, Transportation Advisory Board Member

3) Roosevelt Medical Center & Nursing Home in Culbertson, letter from Ms. Vickie Grimsrod

4) Gallatin Airport Authority, letter from Mr. Ted Mathis, Airport Manager

5) Montana Pilots' Association, letter from Mr. R.D. Lipscomb, President

6) Office of Public Instruction, Ms. Mary Larango, letter from Traffic Education Specialist

7) Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, letter from Mr. Bob Walker, State Trails Program Coordinator

8) Montana Citizens Freight Rate, letter from Mr. Viggo Anderson

9) Alliance for the Wild Rockies, letter from Ms. Angela Coffin

10) Letter from Mr. Henry R. Harrington

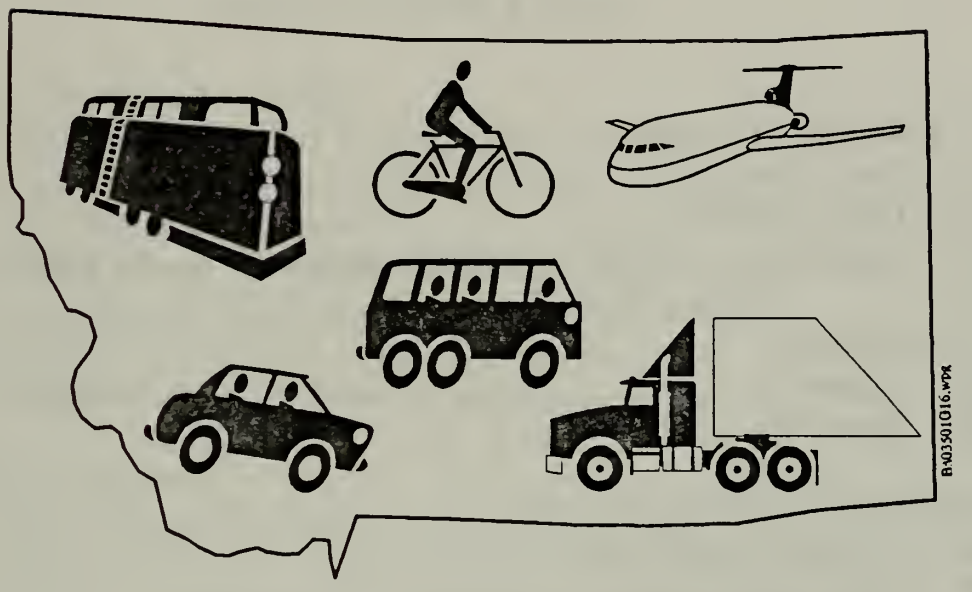
11) Letter from Mr. Cedron Jones

12) Citizens for a Better Flathead, letter from Ms. Judy Cornell and Mr. Bruce Boody

13) DNRC, letter from Mr. Van Jamison

Montana Department of Transportation

TranPlan 21



Public Comment on Plan Alternatives, Policy Choices

December 1994

prepared by

DYE MANAGEMENT GROUP, INC.

Montana Department of Transportation
TranPlan 21
Public Comment On Plan Alternatives, Policy Choices

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Plan Alternatives, Policy Choices

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

The following summarizes the results of public comment on plan alternatives and policy choices developed for TranPlan 21, Montana's statewide transportation plan. The summary draws conclusions that reflect the overall sentiment expressed through discussion, input, and checklists completed at a series of public meetings held in Billings, Butte, Glasgow, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Miles City, and Missoula, five stakeholder focus groups, and presentations to the tribal governments. It provides information on both the preferred plan alternatives and policy choices.

Many individuals expressed strong feelings about individual elements of the policy papers and modal areas. They are described in detail in this document together with written comment that was provided. To maximize public involvement, a telephone survey of 700 Montanans was undertaken to obtain input on the plan alternatives and a number of the policy choices. The results of the survey are presented elsewhere.

A. PLAN ALTERNATIVES

Most Montanans want to maintain current levels of mobility by increasing travel options where cost-effective and improving intermodal connections. There was also support for preservation of the current system and limited new multimodal and intermodal initiatives.

B. POLICY CHOICES

1. Roadways

- Respondents requested that MDT change its current procedures and establish priorities for:
    - Preservation of the highway system.
    - Safety and other improvements.

- Capacity expansion.

- There was also strong support for prioritizing system preservation and maintenance and the preservation of right-of-way in growing corridors.

2. Economic Development

- Montanans placed great emphasis on ensuring that the transportation system supports economic development and supported all policies and actions working towards this goal.

- In particular, they asked MDT to:

  - Work with commercial air carriers to maintain existing levels of service.
  - Coordinate with Canadian authorities.
  - Provide signage for tourism-related activities and minimize billboards.

3. Freight Mobility

- There was general support for improvements to freight mobility by truck and rail.

- Respondents were particularly interested in making sure that:

  - Freight corridors are addressed by regional and local planning.
  - Montana's border crossing needs are met.

- MDT was urged to take action to preserve threatened branch rail lines. However, participants were not quite sure about the proper approach. They did not like the idea of spending state funds for financial support of threatened lines, purchase of right-of-way or rail cars but would like MDT to:

  - Work with the railroad industry to facilitate preservation of branch lines.
  - Retain existing rights-of-way in rail corridors.

- Participants want MDT to encourage the use and increase the performance of existing intermodal facilities, in particular truck/rail reload facilities.

4. Access Management

- Montanans thought that MDT needs to change its access management approach and regulate highway access further.

- They supported strengthened access controls in fast growing areas and development and implementation of a comprehensive access management plan.

- Participants were less sure, however, about funding travel forecasting that would support an access management program.

5. Land Use

- Montanans strongly supported better coordination of land use and transportation planning. In particular, they would like:

    - MDT to work with local jurisdictions to establish a consistent approach.
    - Developers to pay for the traffic demands they generate.
    - Legislation supporting land use planning in fast-growing counties.

6. Public Transportation

- In general, participants supported actions to increase use of public transportation systems. They were not quite sure, however, whether it is appropriate to spend state dollars on transit.

- Many were uncertain about or outright opposed to the idea of allowing transit projects to compete for highway funds.

- Montanans wanted to preserve existing intercity public transportation service and gave MDT a mandate to work with Amtrak to coordinate increased use of rail and preservation of existing service levels.

- Though generally supportive, they were less sure about the need for improved services for the elderly and people with disabilities and the feasibility of transportation demand management in Montana.

7. Bicycle and Pedestrian

- While generally supportive, Montanans were somewhat uncertain about the need for efforts to enhance the role of bicycles and walking and bicycle-related facility improvements.

C. SUBSTANTIVE ADDITIONS TO THE PLAN SUGGESTED BY THE PUBLIC

The following summarizes additional policy areas and recommendations for the plan suggested by the public. Not every individual suggestion is listed, rather, those made by a number of participants are presented.

1. Passenger Rail

- Participants in a number of communities believed that Montana should be actively involved in initiating efforts to introduce passenger rail service across the southern part of the state. They believe that TranPlan 21 has been too ready to dismiss this alternative as not financially feasible. They suggested that at a minimum the state's interest in a southern route should be presented as part of any national passenger rail discussions.

2. Environmental Issues

- Participants suggested that more prominent consideration be given to environmental considerations in planning for the transportation system.

3. State Leadership in Urban Areas

- Many participants believe that the state should have greater involvement in ensuring that there are alternatives to single-occupant vehicles in urban areas. This includes the state taking more responsibility for ensuring a greater provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit, and transportation demand management programs in the urban areas.

I. INTRODUCTION

■

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is preparing the State's first multimodal transportation plan (TranPlan 21). This report presents the results of public involvement undertaken to obtain public comment on the plan alternatives and policy choices addressed by TranPlan 21. It is organized into the following sections:

Section I. **Introduction.** - This describes the purpose of the public involvement and the approach that was taken.

Section II. **Open House Results.** - This provides a summary of the public comments made at the open houses across the state.

Section III. **Focus Group Results.** - This provides a summary of the comments received from focus groups of transportation providers and users.

Section IV. **Tribal Governments' Comments.** - This section documents the comments made by the tribal governments.

Section V. **List of Written Submissions.** - This section lists the written submissions received.

Appendix A. **Public Involvement Checklist Results.** - This appendix includes the results from the checklist used to facilitate public involvement.

Appendix B. **Written Comments Received.** - This appendix includes copies of the written comment on the plan alternatives and policy choices.

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the public involvement was to continue MDT's dialogue with citizens and transportation interests in Montana to identify their preferred plan alternatives and policy choices. The goal was to involve Montanans in determining the priorities for the future of the state's transportation system. The public involvement was designed to allow public comment before the decisions are made by using public input to help choose between the different policy options under consideration for inclusion in TranPlan 21, Montana's first multimodal transportation plan.

B. APPROACH

To solicit comment from citizens and transportation interests and providers, MDT developed a visually appealing and easily accessible document summarizing the plan's policy choices. The document summarized technical work and the more detailed policy papers. These documents were widely disseminated and a variety of different opportunities for comment were provided. Public involvement opportunities included:

1. Public Open Houses

A series of nine open houses for the general public were held in Butte, Great Falls, Glasgow, Havre, Helena, Missoula, Kalispell, Billings, and Miles City. The meetings were publicized in the media and through MDT's newsletter. Participants were informed about TranPlan 21 plan alternatives and policy choices and the importance of their comments through a short 35 millimeter slide presentation which was made twice throughout the four-hour meeting. All participants were provided with the opportunity to voice their priorities and concerns. In addition, a short checklist (See Appendix A) allowed participants to individually define their priorities. The meetings were moderately well attended compared to the initial issue identification open houses.

2. Statewide Focus/Target Group Meetings

A series of roundtable meetings were held in Helena with representatives of agencies and organizations with specific transportation interests. These included:

- Representatives of Montana's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and urban areas.
- Freight and intermodal interests.
- Public transportation interests.
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and environmental interests.
- State and federal resource agencies.

Participants at these meetings were invited by mail for a discussion about their specific interests. The invitation letter for each meeting included the plan alternatives document and the six TranPlan 21 policy papers. A 35 millimeter slide presentation informed participants about TranPlan 21. This was followed by a roundtable

discussion. Invited individuals not able to attend the meeting in Helena were sent a follow-up letter requesting input.

3. Tribal Meetings

A series of presentations outlining the plan alternatives and policy choices were made to the seven tribal governments. Tribal governments provided oral comment and detailed written comment.

4. TranPlan 21 Hotline and Electronic Bulletin Board

In addition to these meetings, MDT provided a 1-800 number (1-800-714-7296) which has been used by citizens unable to attend the meetings. The hotline will be in operation throughout the development of TranPlan 21 to enable citizens to comment on the plan or request information. In addition, the State Electronic Bulletin Board System (444-5648) was available as a mechanism for citizens to provide input.

5. Newsletter

The September edition of MDT's Transportation Newsline Newsletter included a schedule of open houses, a description of the public involvement process, and a brief outline of some of the policy choices. The newsletter was sent to over 3,500 Montanans, including elected officials, stakeholders and interested citizens.

6. Written Comment

MDT also received written comment from transportation interests in the state as documented in Appendix B.

II. OPEN HOUSE MEETING RESULTS

■

In the fall of 1994, the Montana Department of Transportation conducted nine open houses throughout the state. They were held in the following locations: Billings, Butte, Glasgow, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, Miles City, and Missoula. The open houses were designed to obtain public input on policy choices under consideration for TranPlan 21. This section summarizes comment received during the open house meetings. The individual comments provided are listed. Participants in the open houses were also provided the opportunity to complete a checklist to record their policy choices. The checklists are tabulated in Appendix A.

A. BILLINGS - Open House

Sixteen individuals attended the open house. Affiliations were not identified on the sign-in sheet, but there were citizens from the communities of Pryor, Lavina, and Billings.

Eleven individuals completed checklists. However, not all individuals remarked on every point. The following provides a summary of the checklist results, written comment, and discussion during the meeting.

1. Plan Alternatives

a. Checklist Results

- Maintaining the current levels of mobility by increasing travel options where cost-effective and improving intermodal connections was the alternative nine respondents favored.

- There was strong opposition (seven respondents) to maintaining the status quo through continuing current transportation policies in Montana.

b. Comment and Discussion

- Long-range planning is important to meet the needs of a growing population.
- Prioritizing user demands, environmental protection, and improvement costs must be considered by TranPlan 21.
- The fuel tax should be explored as a mechanism of equitable funding for future improvements.
- There is a need to coordinate between local jurisdictions, tribes, state, and Bureau of Indian Affairs.

2. Policy Choices

a. Roadways

(1) Checklist Results

- The majority of respondents in Billings wanted to see MDT establish priorities for roadway improvements. They particularly supported the following priorities:
  - Preserving Montana's highway system.
  - Safety improvements.
  - Capacity expansions.
  - Other improvements.
- Many thought that Montana's highway infrastructure should be modernized and considered right-of-way preservation in growing corridors important.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Concern was expressed that county-maintained roads currently fall through the funding cracks.

b. Economic Development

(1) Checklist Results

- All policies and action items received majority support, none were opposed.

- The two action items receiving support by (virtually) all respondents were:

  - Work with commercial air carriers to maintain existing levels of service (11), and
  - Work with shippers and private providers to identify access improvements (9).

(2) Comment and Discussion

- There are infrastructure needs aside from new highway construction that must be addressed in order to support economic development.

- Billboards should be eventually eliminated. Change over to highway kiosks.

c. Freight Mobility

(1) Checklist Results

- The majority of respondents were in support of ensuring freight mobility on Montana's highways. MDT should:

  - Prioritize improvements in key corridors.
  - Address impediments to efficient freight movement on freight highway corridors.
  - Work with local and regional planners.
  - Address border crossing needs.

- Although respondents generally supported actions to preserve freight rail, there was a considerable amount of uncertainty about some action items. The group did agree that MDT should:

  - Work with the railroad industry to facilitate the preservation of threatened branch lines, and

- Address priority grade separation needs at busy railroad crossings.

- Preserving threatened branch lines, providing financial support, and funding improvements in key freight corridors were action items not supported by the majority of respondents.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Concern about the lack of uniformity of size and weight regulations on trucks that move between Montana and Canada.

- In eastern Montana branch lines are used primarily for grain shipments. In Montana, however, the rail industry is encouraging large terminals for unit trains and abandoning branch lines. In Nebraska the Union Pacific kept some branch lines open by coordinating loading of periodic unit trains with grain elevators on the branch lines. Is there potential for this approach in Montana?

- Encourage private sector development of truck/rail transfer facilities.

- Encourage private investment with public infrastructure support.

d. Access Management

(1) Checklist Results

- The majority of respondents at the Billings open house supported the development of a comprehensive access management plan that will:
  - Strengthen access controls in fast growing areas.
  - Establish a classification scheme for access management.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- There is a need to educate and inform the general public and local officials on land use planning issues. It will be difficult to address access management without land use planning.

e. Land Use

(1) Checklist Results

- The majority of respondents strongly supported land use planning policies and action items:
    - They believed that local jurisdictions should be encouraged to undertake land use planning to manage transportation demands.
    - They felt there was a need to enact legislation to support land-use planning in the fast-growing counties.
    - Technical assistance for local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning should be established and funded.
    - Individuals also want to require developers to pay a fee for resulting traffic demands.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- It will be important to balance the land use objectives of local communities with the State's mission of preserving the integrity and safety of Montana's highway systems.

- More comprehensive (land use) planning must be incorporated into the twenty-year plan.

f. Public Transportation

(1) Checklist Results

- The majority of the respondents wanted MDT to encourage the use of public transportation and develop promotional and educational programs. They also agreed that future highway improvements should accommodate public transportation needs. Providing funding for a public transit program received majority support, however, respondents were uncertain whether transit projects should be allowed to compete for highway funds.

- Preserving intercity public transportation services received majority support. In particular, respondents requested:
    - Cost-effective solutions.
    - The retention and expansion of Amtrak services.

- Respondents were only moderately interested in the development of a statewide transportation demand management (TDM) plan. They felt that TDM strategies should be addressed at the local level by transit providers and state agencies should develop a plan for state government.

(2) **Comment and Discussion**

- Public transportation is difficult to address from a statewide perspective because of the varied needs of rural and urban areas.

- Services could be improved if there were more coordination between public transportation vendors. Changes in regulations could assist with public transit needs and private transportation systems.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

(1) **Checklist Results**

- Bicycles and walking were seen as recreational, not as institutionalized modes of travel.

- Despite that, respondents were in strong support of all actions providing for the development and improvement of bicycle facilities in Montana.

(2) **Comment and Discussion**

- School sidewalk programs are helping to address some nonmotorized transportation issues, but urban areas should be working to identify a network of bicycle or walking routes that could fit into transportation system improvements.

B. BUTTE - Open House

Fourteen citizens attended this open house. Private business people, chamber of commerce representatives, city planners, citizens, and a reporter were present. Six participants completed the checklist. The following provides an overview of the checklist results, written comments concerning specific checklist items, and meeting discussions.

1. Plan Alternatives

a. Checklist Results

- Maintaining the current level of mobility by increasing cost effective travel options was the number one choice of Butte participants.

b. Comment and Discussion

- Local governments should have the option to levy taxes to meet increased demands. The state should provide flexibility to the local governments to address the funding needs over the next 20 years.

2. Policy Choices

a. Roadways

- The majority of respondents favored the establishment of priorities that would:
  - Preserve the highway system.
  - Implement safety and other improvements.
  - Expand capacity.
- They also supported the preservation of right-of-way in growing corridors.

b. Economic Development

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents strongly supported all actions promoting economic development, with one exception, they were unsure about establishing a city park and rest area program.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- A city park and rest area program may produce negative impacts on the community's economic development--visitors will stay at the park and not go into town to eat or shop.
- Do not stifle business growth by limiting billboards.

- The importance of coordinating state and local planning to reinforce economic development actions was emphasized.

c. Freight Mobility

(1) Checklist Results

- Butte respondents felt the best actions to ensure highway freight mobility were to:
  - Address the impediments that affect effective movement.
  - Ensure that freight corridors are addressed by local and regional plans.
  - Ensure that border crossing needs are met.
- Respondents were very interested in preserving freight rail. They want MDT to take action to:
  - Work with the railroad industry to facilitate the preservation of branch lines.
  - Retain existing rights-of-way in rail corridors.
- The majority of the respondents supported improvements to intermodal connectivity and expanded use of existing truck/rail reload facilities.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Maximizing the use of rail should be a policy option.
- What about north-south corridors--will NAFTA affect the makeup of rail corridors?

d. Access Management

(1) Checklist Results

- All individuals unanimously agreed that access management controls were needed to address traffic congestion in fast growing areas.
- The group also unanimously agreed the MDT should identify, expand, and reconfigure key corridors, as well as jump start access management in certain corridors that require immediate attention.

e. Land Use

(1) Checklist Results

- Butte respondents supported land use planning policies and believed the best way to accomplish this was at the local level. MDT should work with local jurisdictions to develop a consistent approach.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- How will this plan address land use on the reservations?
- Instead of creating a state fund to provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions, just give them the money.
- If legislation is enacted to address land use planning, make sure the counties are involved.

f. Public Transportation

(1) Checklist Results

- Public transportation needs should be incorporated into future highway improvements. However, Butte respondents did not want the state to provide funding for transit, nor did they want to see public transportation projects competing for highway funds.
- The majority also supported the preservation of existing intercity services and they agreed that a feasibility study should investigate unserved areas.
- Respondents want to preserve existing Amtrak services and increase use, particularly along the southern route. They believe that this should be added to TranPlan 21.
- MDT should work with other agencies to address needs of and coordinate services for social service passengers.
- Although the transportation demand management policy fell short of majority support, it also received no opposition. Most respondents were uncertain about this concept.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents were uncertain about the role of bicycles and walking and the need for any improvements for these modes.
- There was some support for a tourist guide and the dissemination of safety information.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- One participant noted they would rather have highways, but they believe bicycle and pedestrian travel is in the future, so MDT should plan for it.

C. GLASGOW - Open House

Three people attended this meeting. They did not return checklists but made some comments:

- Secondary and county roads in the area show the impact of rail branch line loss.
- Canadian grain trucks are also impacting roads in the area.
- The State Department of Agriculture should be more involved in the transportation planning process.

D. GREAT FALLS - Open House

Sixteen individuals attended the Great Falls Open House. They included legislators, planners, business people, citizens, and special interest group representatives. Nine of the participants completed the checklist. The following overview provides a summary of the checklist results, written comments, and meeting discussions.

1. Plan Alternatives

a. Checklist Results

- Maintaining current levels of mobility was the number one choice of the Great Falls public.
- All respondents were opposed to declining service levels and a continuation of current policies.

b. Comment and Discussion

- An approach that goes beyond preservation of the existing system with its implied reduction in the level of mobility but does not make an attempt to fully maintain current levels of mobility might be most realistic.
- Fuel tax funds must be used for Montana's highway system and nothing else.

2. Policy Choices

a. Roadways

(1) Checklist Results

- All nine respondents agreed that MDT should establish priorities to preserve highways, improve safety, and expand capacity.
- Review of geometric design standards and undertaking right-of-way preservation in growing corridors also received unanimous support.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- System preservation and maintenance were concerns of this group.

b. Economic Development

(1) Checklist Results

- Great Falls citizens were very much in favor of policies and actions supporting economic development. In particular, they wanted Montana to participate in an examination of multistate trade corridors.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Establish historic preservation and interpretation programs to encourage tourism and economic development.

- The proliferation of billboards on highway corridors is becoming the largest negative impact on tourism, the environment, and aesthetics.

c. Freight Mobility

(1) Checklist Results

- Participants want MDT and local governments to ensure efficient highway freight mobility.

- MDT should take action to preserve the existing freight rail system and:

    - Work with railroad companies to preserve branch lines.
    - Eliminate the busiest rail crossings.
    - Retain existing rights-of-way in rail corridors.

- Improving intermodal connectivity was supported by the majority of respondents. They were uncertain, however, about the state's role in providing rail cars.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- In order to provide an efficient transportation system, MDT must work with the private sector and ensure coordination.

- Before any decisions are made on branch lines, a financial analysis should be performed and criteria should be developed to ensure that any public funding would be wisely allocated.

- Work with Montana Rail Link and Burlington Northern.

d. Access Management

(1) Checklist Results

- MDT should take action to strengthen access controls in the fast growing areas, develop and implement a comprehensive access management plan that identifies corridors requiring action.

- Great Falls respondents also supported travel demand forecasting and were willing to fund this service.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- MDT must work with local authorities to make access management work.

- Access controls restrain economic development.

e. Land Use

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents agreed that MDT should work with the local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning to effectively manage transportation demand. Establishing and funding technical assistance to local jurisdictions was also approved by the majority of participants.

- Developers should pay a fee to compensate for the increased traffic demands their developments create.

- Respondents also supported the enactment of legislation to support land use planning in fast-growing counties.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Coordinate infrastructure improvements and planning with local planning agencies to ensure land use planning and transportation system improvements are compatible.

- Land use planning should not be undertaken by MDT.

f. Public Transportation

(1) Checklist Results

- Increased involvement with public transportation systems was supported by a majority of the participants; ensuring that highway improvements address public transportation received unanimous support.

- The option of funding transit systems with state revenues received mixed reactions, as did the proposal to allow transit to compete for highway funds.

- Preserving and expanding Amtrak services received strong support.

- Coordination among appropriate agencies was viewed as the best way to address public transportation needs for the elderly and disabled.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Look for ways to simplify the planning process and paperwork associated with transportation planning.

- Transit needs to address scheduling in order to be more profitable--we have large buses running with no riders during many times of the day.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

(1) Checklist Results

- Participants in Great Falls, as in other locations, were uncertain about bicycle and pedestrian policies. There was some support for:

    - Preparation of a bicycle tourist guide.
    - Preservation of a bicycle network.
    - Establishment of an advisory committee.
    - Dissemination of bicycle safety information.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Consider bicycle facility provisions during the development of all major roadway projects to ensure bicycle mobility is not compromised.

- Ensure that designers and engineers are knowledgeable about bicycle design standards.

E. HAVRE - Open House

Fifteen individuals attended the Havre Open House. They included the mayor, county commissioners, representatives from the chamber, retirees, and other citizens. Eleven of the participants completed the checklist. The following overview provides a summary of the checklist results, written comments, and meeting discussions.

1. Plan Alternatives

a. Checklist Results

- Preserving the current system and undertaking limited new initiatives was the number one choice of Havre participants.

b. Comment and Discussion

- It was stated that the plan should address transportation issues from a regional perspective and recognize that the state's problems and needs are diverse.

- Participants noted that people demand services, but they are often not willing to pay for them.

- How does the public know what we can afford. The public may select options that are too expensive.

2. Policy Choices

a. Roadways

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents unanimously and strongly supported the establishment of the following roadway improvement priorities:

  - Highway system preservation.
  - Safety improvements.
  - Capacity expansions.

- They wanted MDT to focus on highway system preservation and maintenance.

b. Economic Development

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents in Havre, as in other locations, agreed that the transportation system must support economic development. The following actions had unanimous support:

  - Work with shippers and private providers to identify access improvements.
  - Work with commercial air carriers to maintain existing levels of service.

- Participants want MDT to:

  - Coordinate with the Department of Commerce.
  - Establish a city park and rest area program.
  - Coordinate planning with Canadian authorities.
  - Prioritize tourist-related transportation enhancements.
  - Provide signage for tourism-related activities and minimize billboards.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- The federal formula for funding distribution should be changed.
- Make sure the Canadian government coordinates with Montana.
- Economic development could be enhanced by expanding Highway 2 to four lanes.

c. Freight Mobility

(1) Checklist Results

- Actions ensuring efficient highway freight mobility received most support. Participants were particularly interested in:
  - Ensuring that Montana's border crossing needs were met received the majority's support.
  - Addressing freight corridor needs at the local and regional levels.
- Working with the railroad industry to preserve branch lines and retaining right-of-way in existing rail corridors were seen as the best solutions for freight rail mobility issues.
- Havre respondents were uncertain about or opposed to committing state revenues to freight rail preservation or the purchase of rail cars.
- Participants wanted to encourage use of intermodal facilities, in particular truck/rail reload facilities, and improve performance.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Comments indicated skepticism that the state could successfully support freight rail. The following opinion was expressed, "The railroad has already pulled out of here--if they cannot make it work, how does the state expect to do it? What good is it if it can't pay its own way?"
- The opinion was expressed, that if more freight goes onto the highways because of branch line losses and lack of support, we must

maintain those roads. Roads must be designed for bigger loads to meet those needs.

- The grain industry tried in the past to provide rail cars without success. This makes state provision of cars questionable.

d. Access Management

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents wanted MDT to retain the existing access management approach.

- However, they requested that MDT strengthen controls in fast-growing areas and identify corridors in need of reconfiguration or expansion.

e. Land Use

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents believed that land use planning should occur at the local level and that MDT should work with local jurisdictions to establish a consistent approach. They also saw a need to fund technical assistance for local jurisdictions.

- Developers should be required to pay a fee to compensate for increased traffic demands.

- Respondents were in favor of legislation that would support land-use planning in fast-growing counties.

f. Public Transportation

(1) Checklist Results

- The Havre public supported public transportation; however, participants were unwilling to commit state funds to transit systems or allow the use of highway funds for transit projects.

- They agreed that future highway improvements must address public transportation needs.

- Preserving intercity transportation services was also supported by a majority of the respondents; the action item that received most support was to work with Amtrak to preserve existing service levels.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

(1) Checklist Results

- Most respondents were uncertain about or opposed to efforts to improve bicycle and pedestrian programs and facilities.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Examine the possibility of procuring abandoned railroad lines for bike trail use.

F. HELENA - Open House

Thirty individuals attended the Helena open house. Representatives from environmental organizations, special interest groups, including bicycle advocates, citizens and four individuals from Lewistown were present. Seventeen participants completed the checklist. The following provides an overview of the checklist results, written comments, and meeting discussions.

1. Plan Alternatives

a. Checklist Results

- Participants at the Helena open house definitely wanted to see change occur, and were in strong opposition to no change in policy.

- Maintaining the current level of mobility was chosen by all respondents. There also was support for preserving the current system and limited new initiatives.

b. Comment and Discussion

- Developing a high service transportation system could become a viable goal. Funding increases may not be necessary if priorities were shifted and paradigms changed.

- Preservation of the state's secondary systems should be addressed.

- Significant increases in fuel taxes should not happen.
- Land use planning could be a cost-effective way to address transportation demand.
- Incorporate bicycle/pedestrian facilities and TDM practices into service on existing facilities.
- Paving low-volume roads is absurd. It encourages sprawl, and perpetuates the problems.
- Historic preservation stakeholders are illustrated in the flow chart, but there is no mention of historic preservation in the plan.
- There is no environmental action items incorporated into any of the policies. Make sure MDT coordinates with appropriate agencies when designing and planning new projects. Make sure erosion control, native landscaping (wild flowers), and storm water drainage needs are addressed in the plan.
- How does the Scenic Byway program fit into the proposed alternatives?
- What are the funding considerations for each Plan Alternative? Will any of the funding requirements be passed onto local governments?
- In order for any alternative to be successfully implemented, local jurisdictions must ensure that they can fulfill their responsibilities. They may, in some cases, require some technical planning assistance.
- State agencies must coordinate their efforts to ensure better planning outcomes.
- Essential air service is vitally important to Lewistown's economy and the other communities receiving subsidized service. Enplanements have risen dramatically recently and this should be reflected in planning documents.

2. Policy Choices

a. Roadways

(1) Checklist Results

- The public wanted MDT to establish priorities as follows for roadway improvements:
  - Preservation of Montana's highway system.
  - Safety and other improvements.
  - Capacity expansion.
- Respondents further supported right-of-way preservation in growing corridors and prioritization of system preservation and maintenance.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- When setting priorities, preservation, intermodal connections, and bicycle and pedestrian issues must be addressed.
- Roadway choices should involve land use planning.
- When undertaking right-of-way preservation in growth corridors historic preservation must also be addressed.
- Paving low-volume roads is unwise--it encourages sprawl and perpetuates transportation problems. There will never be enough money for long-term maintenance.
- Be selective about modernization of Montana's highway infrastructure.
- Coordination should occur between MDT and local jurisdictional planners when new projects are being developed.
- Landscaping should be addressed as an action item somewhere in the plan.

b. Economic Development

(1) Checklist Results

- Helena participants wanted to see MDT incorporate economic development concerns into its transportation planning processes as outlined in the policies and actions.

- They want MDT to work with commercial air carriers to maintain existing levels of service.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- MDT should address transportation and economic planning from a regional perspective, not a statewide one.

- In order to produce effective planning outcomes at the regional level, transportation and economic planners must have a sound understanding of the two different planning processes in order to understand how they compliment, interface, impact, and enhance the outcomes.

- When establishing a city park/rest area, incorporate local historic preservation issues into the plan. Keep rest areas open 12 months of the year.

- Develop a strategy to promote air freight.

- The economic development policies are oriented towards the exporting industries. Attention should also be placed on moving Montana-made products within the state.

c. Freight Mobility

(1) Checklist Results

- Participants supported a policy which safeguards the mobility of freight on Montana's highways. There was strong agreement that highway improvements in freight corridors must be prioritized and impediments identified. All of the respondents agreed that local and regional planners should play a key role in the strategic planning.

- Helena respondents agreed that the Montana Department of Transportation should preserve existing rail and air systems by working with the railroad industry to facilitate the preservation of branch lines.

- Addressing priority grade separation needs and retaining existing rights of way in rail corridors received strong support and no opposition.

- Participants supported actions to improve intermodal conductivity but were not in favor of state provision of rail cars.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Not all branch rail lines should be maintained, but right-of-way should be.

- When funding improvements in key freight rail corridors, prevent negative impacts on the community. Some communities, like Helena, are already experiencing delays caused by railroads, like the Montana Avenue Crossing.

- Must do more to enhance freight movement by rail with positive returns on investment.

- The state should own rail right-of-way and track, but others should own stock and run the railroad.

- Perhaps the state could fund cooperative ownership of rail cars.

- Ensure MDT has an in-house modal expert. Considering the value of freight moving interstate, Montana's role under NAFTA, and the importance of interstate commerce policies (rail and motor carriers) on Montana's economic development, it is clear that MDT should be involved in national freight issues.

- Enable the ready transport of goods from one part of state to another.

d. Access Management

(1) Checklist Results

- Participants strongly supported strengthening access management controls, establishing a classification scheme, and developing and implementing a comprehensive access management plan.

- Respondents also agreed that certain corridors dealing with capacity concerns and access management issues should be provided with the mechanism to immediately address the pressing problems. Participants also were willing to fund travel demand forecasting to support access management decisions.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Do not preclude access control in those areas that are not the "fastest" growing. Allow those areas the opportunity, if they wish, to participate in any new access management or corridor management programs.

- Before defining criteria and implementing the access management classification scheme, solicit local input.

- When identifying corridors needing expansions or reconfigurations, include bicycle/pedestrian traffic.

- Work with local planners and legislative bodies to plan access points for new developments.

- Look at access to non-highway and non-rail alternatives (for example recreational travel, corridors for horse, bicycle, hiking).

- Travel demand forecasting as it presently being used, is done to meet demands, not manage demands and that paradigm needs to change.

e. Land Use

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents strongly agreed that land use planning must be a key component of a long-range transportation plan.

- MDT should encourage local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning to address transportation demand and work to develop consistent approaches.

- Participants thought that technical assistance should be funded to help local jurisdictions undertake land use planning and agreed that the state needs a defensible mechanism to levy a developer's fee to offset new traffic demands.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Planning alone is not enough, the local jurisdiction must also implement its plans.

- A local match should be required to pay for technical planning assistance.

- The larger jurisdictions may not need financial and technical assistance--maybe just the small communities who do not have the staff expertise or revenues to conduct land use planning.

- Land use planning assistance is presently available through the Department of Commerce. Instead of creating a new program, MDT should form a partnership.

- Make sure local jurisdictions coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions. Actions in one jurisdiction impact adjacent and neighboring areas.

- Legislation requiring development impact fees should be enacted, but perhaps MDT should not take the lead. Perhaps a group like the Montana Association of Planners should take the lead; MDT could work with this group to draft legislation.

- Land use planning should be viewed from a regional perspective. Ensure communication that provides regional planning overviews,

problems, projects, and other updates. Regional leaders must be kept informed about statewide planning activities and initiatives.

- Work with local governments, other agencies, and the legislature to develop statewide land use guidelines.

- Create a policy to develop corridor plans and right-of-way capacity limits.

- Land use development follows roads and pavement. Some mechanisms need to be implemented to limit site developments and concentrate population.

- Encourage and or require metropolitan areas to have a comprehensive land use plan.

f. Public Transportation

(1) Checklist Results

- Participants generally supported efforts to facilitate increased use of public transportation systems but were unsure about the state funding of public transportation.

- Preservation of the existing intercity transportation services received support. Respondents agreed that MDT should:

    - Evaluate the feasibility of new intercity service in unserved areas.
    - Implement a rural ridesharing demonstration program.
    - Coordinate with Amtrak to facilitate the preservation and increased use of rail services.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Develop promotional/educational programs on public transportation options in coordination with Travel Montana, which already publishes several informational/promotional documents.

- Provide state-level funding support for transit only to support local public transportation and do not limit support to those communities that already have access to it.

- MDT should take a strong lead to endorse TDM on a statewide basis, and to coordinate rural ride sharing demonstration programs.

- MDT should be working toward the introduction of a southern Amtrak route.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

(1) Checklist Results

- Participants supported a policy to institutionalize bicycle/pedestrian modes and wanted to make targeted bicycle-related improvements. Support for nonmotorized modes was stronger than in other locations.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- The Office of Public Instruction already has a bicycle program that addresses safety.

- When preparing a bicycle related tourist guide, a network must be identified. MDT should secure input from bicycle recreationists, local planners, chambers of commerce, Montana Travel, and other interested stakeholders. Coordinate with other agencies to develop an integrated system of trails, including long-distance routes, and develop a systematic approach (inter-agency) for acquiring abandoned rail corridors.

- Encourage driver respect for the bicyclist and pedestrian when making public service announcements.

- When making roadway improvements, review rumble strips and adjust them for easier and safer bicycle movement.

- Address bicycle/pedestrian paths during preliminary construction designs--more cost-effective.

G. KALISPELL - Open House

Planners, citizens, chamber representatives, economic development professionals, and reporters were represented. Six individuals completed the checklist. The following provides an overview of the checklist results, written comments, and meeting discussions.

1. Plan Alternatives

a. Checklist Results

- Maintaining current levels of mobility by increasing travel options was the number one choice of Kalispell respondents.

2. Policy Choices

a. Roadway

(1) Checklist Results

- The Kalispell public wanted MDT to establish priorities for roadway improvements, preserve right-of-way in growth corridors, and prioritize system preservation and maintenance.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Prioritizing improvements for roadway systems must have a degree of flexibility to accommodate changing growth patterns and trends.

b. Economic development

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents supported all economic development policies and actions.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- When factoring transportation planning into economic development, make sure there is involvement and cooperation from local communities.

c. Freight Mobility

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents supported efforts to ensure efficient freight mobility on Montana's highways and improvements to intermodal connectivity but were unsure about the need for MDT to work towards preserving freight rail.

d. Access Management

(1) Checklist Results

- Participants wanted strengthened access controls in the fast-growing areas and supported the development and implementation of a comprehensive access management plan.

e. Land Use

(1) Checklist Results

- The respondents unanimously agreed that local jurisdictions should undertake land use planning. They also wanted to see a consistent approach established and supported development impact fees.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Working with local jurisdictions to establish a consistent approach is critical.

- The state should be actively involved in land use planning and related activities.

f. Public Transportation

(1) Checklist Results

- Kalispell respondents agreed that public transportation systems should be supported and promoted, however, the state should not provide funding to transit. Allowing transit projects to compete with highway improvement funding also lacked support.

- Kalispell respondents were concerned about transit for social service passengers and agreed the best approach was coordination with other state agencies.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- They wanted to see an expansion of Amtrak services in Montana, and wanted MDT to facilitate the preservation of existing service levels and explore reactivating the southern route.

- Transportation demand management should be implemented at the local level.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

(1) Checklist Results

- Institutionalizing bicycle and pedestrian modes and targeted bicycle-related improvements received support.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Coordinate with local communities. For example some towns already have bicycle trail guides, field trips/tours.

- Safety must be a prime concern for bike path design.

H. MILES CITY - Open House

Four individuals attended the Miles City open house. Residents from Miles City and Terry were present. All four respondents completed the checklist. The following provides an overview of the checklist results, written comments, and meeting discussions.

1. Plan Alternatives

a. Checklist Results

- Respondents supported maintaining current mobility levels.

2. Policy Choices

a. Roadways

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents supported the establishment of roadway improvement priorities, modernization of the highway infrastructure, and prioritization of system preservation and maintenance.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Needs of low volume roads should be addressed.

b. Economic Development

(1) Checklist Results

- Miles City participants supported efforts to support economic development through the transportation system.

c. Freight Mobility

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents agreed that MDT should address highway and rail freight mobility and improve intermodal connectivity.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Essential air service is important to the area.

d. Access Management

(1) Checklist Results

- Miles City respondents did not oppose, nor did they support any of the access management policies.

e. Land Use

(1) Checklist Results

- Land use planning policies received mixed reviews.

f. Public Transportation

(1) Checklist Results

- People in the Miles City area supported public transportation policies, preservation of intercity public transportation services, and were willing to provide funding for transit.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- B & T Transit has plans to expand bus services across Highway 2 which will connect Minot with Spokane and make connections in Miles City, Jordan, and Wolf Point.

- Having some form of access to medical services is important for Terry residents.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents supported bicycle and pedestrian policies and wanted MDT to institutionalize these modes of travel and target bicycle-related improvements.

I. MISSOULA - Open House

Twenty-two individuals attended this open house. County officials, citizens, special interest groups, and community development representatives were present. Fifteen individuals completed the checklist. The following provides an overview of the checklist results, written comments, and meeting discussions:

1. Plan Alternatives

a. Checklist Results

- The Missoula public selected maintaining current levels of mobility as their number one choice. Development of a high service transportation system also received support.

- Respondents were opposed to declining levels of service due to a continuation of current policies.

b. Comment and Discussion

- Support new initiatives that will establish intermodal passenger transportation systems.

- Making highway improvements (more traffic lanes) will encourage more vehicle trips.

- The future availability of energy, energy conservation, and air quality should be factored into the plan.

2. Policy Choices

a. Roadways

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents supported the establishments of priorities that would address:

    - Highway system preservation.
    - Safety and other improvements.
    - Capacity expansions.

- There was strong interest in right-of-way preservation in growth corridors.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Establish priorities for roadway improvements where cost-effective.
- Set priorities for capacity expansions--we do not want Montana to look like California.
- Explore other alternatives besides constructing more roads.

b. Economic Development

(1) Checklist Results

- All economic development policies and actions received support, however, the non-response rate was high--at least five individuals withheld their opinions on the majority of policies and actions.
- Tourism-related signage and minimization of billboards was the action that received overwhelming support.
- Establishing a city park and rest area program received strong support.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- MDT should not be in the business of promoting tourism.
- MDT is a player and should work in concert with other agencies and communities to address economic development.
- In addition to maintaining air services in the State, Montana should be attempting to attract more commercial air carriers.
- If the city park rest area is reinstituted, there should be a statewide plan and interpretative concepts should be incorporated into rest area planning.
- Billboards distract and are detrimental to tourist trade. The state should do a better job in regulating off-premise outdoor advertising; the Montana Code should be revised to allow this to happen. If the

state cannot or is unwilling to effectively regulate, legislation should be drafted to grant authority to the counties.

- There is a need for improvements on Department of the Interior roads that connect state parks.

- There should be a mechanism to factor the need for connecting urban trails into transportation planning.

- Abandoned rail corridors should be held for trail opportunities.

c. Freight Mobility

(1) Checklist Results

- Although no major opposition surfaced regarding the freight mobility choices, the response rates were low. Interest was strongest for the following action items:

  - Preserving threatened branch lines.
  - Funding rail improvements in key corridors.
  - Retaining existing rights-of-way.

- Participants wanted to see intermodal facilities improve performance levels and increased use at truck/rail reload facilities. They did not believe that the state should provide rail cars.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Major repairs on Montana's highways are the result of heavy truck traffic. Truck permits and fuel tax revenues do not cover the cost of maintenance.

d. Access Management

(1) Checklist Results

- The Missoula public expressed a strong interest in access management. Participants wanted to:

  - Strengthen access controls.
  - Establish a classification scheme.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive access management plan.

- They were in strong agreement that corridors experiencing safety, capacity, and development pressures should be given a jump start. The Missoula group also expressed a willingness to fund travel demand forecasting.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Access management is a good idea for certain areas/corridors, however, a comprehensive access management plan is not needed in all parts of the state.

- The development of comprehensive plans should be done in conjunction with local jurisdictions. Funding assistance should be made available.

- Travel demand forecasting can be accomplished without increasing funding.

- MDT should take the lead and provide a planning forum for Montana's major corridors. State level leadership is necessary to bring the counties together.

e. Land Use

(1) Checklist Results

- Respondents thought that land use planning should be undertaken. All policy and action items received support. Providing authority to assess developer fees and enactment of land-use planning legislation were items that received a particularly strong showing of support.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- MDT should not be taking a leadership role in land use planning. It seems like it will place strain on the planning section. This idea may be more acceptable if the burden of responsibility can be equally distributed among other agencies.

- Funding technical assistance for local jurisdictions is already in place; it is just not utilized.

- Transportation demand is based on reactions to land use change and growth--counties/cities need to realize the need to control land use and to adhere to comprehensive plans.

f. Public Transportation

(1) Checklist Results

- Missoula participants agreed that MDT should support public transportation and provide state-level funding, however, they were unsure if transit projects should be allowed to compete with highway projects.

- There was support for state involvement with intercity bus services, but participants agreed that appropriate actions to address intercity public transportation should be identified.

- There was strong support for the rural ridesharing program and the preservation/expansion of Amtrak services.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Improving schedules of intercity buses could increase use--scheduling is presently inadequate.

- Participants thought that service for social service passengers should be improved and would like better coordination among state agencies. They also supported transportation demand management actions.

- Participants noted that, although ridership could be higher, there is considerable public support for the transit system.

- The hours of operation of the fixed route and demand responsive systems in Missoula are a constraint for the transit-dependent.

- Participants believed that TranPlan 21 should involve establishing Amtrak service in southern Montana where the state's population lives.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

(1) Checklist Results

- Missoula respondents were supportive of actions and policies supporting bicycle and pedestrian travel, however, they believe that TranPlan 21 needs to go further to address bicycle and pedestrian needs. They were particularly interested in targeted improvements for bicycles and preservation of the designated bicycle network.

(2) Comment and Discussion

- Encourage local jurisdiction to address bicycle and pedestrian options--MDT's role should be that of a facilitator.
- Preparation of bicycle tourist guides should be the local jurisdiction's responsibility.
- Pedestrian facilities are not mentioned under this category--this applies to recreational and utilitarian uses.
- Recognize the regional variations: climate, urban/rural, university or non-university town.
- Intermodal connections are essential--such as bicycle racks on buses.
- Provide funding to support bicycle/pedestrian routes--include routes that parallel the highway.
- Bridge design in Missoula is important to bicycle mobility.
- Rumble strips along shoulders inhibit bicycle traffic.
- How many tourists actually use bicycles in Montana? This mode of travel may be most relevant in areas where tourists are clustered or in areas adjacent to major tourist destinations.
- Bicycle-friendly design standards should be implemented in high-demand areas only.

III. FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

■

This section summarizes the public comment on the plan alternatives and policy choices provided by the participants in five focus group meetings held in Helena. A number of the participants subsequently provided written comment which is reproduced in Appendix B.

A. INTERMODAL FREIGHT

Six individuals attended the intermodal focus group meeting. Representatives from the Montana Motor Carriers Association, Montana Western Railway, Montana Citizens Freight Rate, Montana Farmers Union, the Port of Shelby, and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation were present. The comment focused mainly on the Intermodal Freight and the Economic Development policy papers.

The stakeholders in attendance made the following comments and suggestions:

1. Planning and Coordination

- Freight carriers should cooperate and plan together.
- The group felt that it was very important to have an in-house freight expert at MDT. The State needs to know what is going on with shippers in Montana and other states and monitor federal actions because they affect local shippers. The state needs to keep shippers informed.

2. Freight Mobility

a. Motor Carrier

- The statement that heavier trucks have a disproportionately higher impact on pavement conditions needs to be clarified. The term heavier truck is too general and its application in the policy paper is unclear. Axle weights are set by law and the gross weights are determined by a formula insuring weight distribution over the length of the truck. Longer combination vehicles actually distribute the gross weight over greater lengths and have lower axle weights than five axle trucks, and therefore have less impact.

- The policy paper reports the key finding of Montana's cost responsibility study that motor carriers pay their share of interstate and primary system costs. However, more emphasis could be placed on describing the role the motor carrier industry plays and the different markets served to provide a more positive emphasis on the role of trucks in Montana. A comprehensive study of truck freight mobility and its impact on the state's economy should be completed.

- The Montana Motor Carriers were concerned that any diversion of highway funds to rail should not take place. Rail funding was not opposed but using highway funds for rail was.

- There was concern about the impact of trucks on secondary system routes that were not constructed to handle larger trucks.

b. Rail

- Railroads are the best carrier to move freight out of rural areas.

- When addressing branch line preservation, the following items need to be considered:

    - Perform cost-benefit analysis to determine whether it is more cost-effective to retain the line or update the road to accommodate the freight. (For example, the branch line into Valier is threatened, however, that line moves a lot of grain.)

    - A uniform mechanism to address branch line problems on a case-by-case basis should be developed. Each case needs to be subjected to a thorough benefit-cost analysis.

    - Working with the railroad industry to facilitate preservation is very important.

- State funding of improvements that increase rail performance, if implemented, should be subject to rigid controls and be monitored carefully. Strong community support should be mandatory.

- Efforts to address priority grade separation needs should be cooperative.

- It is unrealistic for the state to purchase rail cars. There is not a rail car shortage. They just need to be reallocated.

- The state should not be in the rail car business. If there are rail car shortages, look at providing tax incentives to the growers and elevators for them to lease the cars. The state should not be making grants to private businesses.

B. BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL

Seven representatives from the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, the Alternative Energy Resources Organization, and the Montana Audubon Council attended. Their comments addressed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and the Access Management and Land Use policy papers. Stakeholders made the following comments and recommendations:

1. Planning and Coordination

- The management systems should act as tools to put MDT in a proactive mode to anticipate problems and plan for appropriate alternatives.

- Costs should be factored into alternatives so better decisions can be made.

- The existing forecasting methodology needs to be revised to address vehicle miles traveled, not just total miles traveled. How many passenger trips and what are the lengths of those trips are data that should be analyzed. The forecasting methodology will affect decision making and allocation of resources.

- The plan alternatives document does not show how environmental considerations have been addressed. There is no policy paper that addresses air quality and the natural environment.

- Interagency cooperation was strongly endorsed. It was pointed out that there are existing efforts to address environmental issues early on in the project development process that MDT and federal and other state agencies are already undertaking. This should be referenced in the plan.

- Funding mechanisms need to be revised in order to consider multimodal projects.

- We need to be reducing traffic growth and not planning how to accommodate it.

- The plan needs to be more far reaching in promoting alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle and in building a transportation system which will prevent the plan's traffic forecasts from becoming a self fulfilling prophecy.

2. Roadways

- The roadway policies should include more consideration of transportation demand management and the potential to reduce daily trips and decrease single-occupant-vehicle use.

- Highways should not be designed to handle peak hour traffic, because the road at other times is not handling such large volumes.

3. Access Management

- Access management must address incentives. Areas that do not implement access management should not be rewarded with large projects.

4. Land Use Planning

- There was support for land use planning and the recognition that local jurisdictions will require technical assistance.

5. Public Transportation

- The plan does not address children's use of public transportation. More children would ride or walk to school if safety and congestion barriers were removed. Parents drive to school and cause congestion problems because of these perceived barriers.

6. Bicycle and Pedestrian

- When designing projects inside city limits, consider how to serve all modes and how new improvements will impact pedestrian and bike traffic.

- The plan needs to further consider pedestrian traffic.

C. MPO AND URBAN AREA

The MPO and Urban Area focus group meeting was attended by four planners from Lewis and Clark County, Yellowstone County, and Anaconda-Deer Lodge County.

The following comments and recommendations were recorded:

1. Planning and Coordination

- MDT should focus planning efforts on early right-of-way acquisitions.
- Mixing private and public monies is very complicated and complex.
- MDT should assist local governments. However, local governments can best determine what the needs are.
- There needs to be some statewide coordination, especially to address the tourist industry.

2. Roadways

- Local government needs funds to reconstruct highways to handle truck traffic.

3. Freight Mobility

- There should be tax incentives to railroads.

4. Access Management

- It will be critical to acknowledge local government's role in access management planning.

5. Land Use

- MDT should encourage local governments to focus on zoning.
- Intersections create new traffic demands and different land use. Will MDT interface intersection planning with land use planning? Land use planning should be completed before interchanges are built. Understanding the relationships between land use and transportation planning is important.

D. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Eight individuals attended the public transportation focus group meeting. Their comments addressed the Public Transportation policy paper and the Plan Alternatives. Representatives from urban transit systems, rural transit systems, the Public Service Commission, the National Association of Rail Passengers, and developmentally disabled advocate organizations were present. Stakeholders made the following comments and recommendations focusing on public transportation issues:

1. Local Transit Service

- A Billings survey indicted that 90 percent of the population never uses public transportation, but they declared it was an essential service for the city. There is support for transit and this should be documented.

- Language outlining some of the disadvantages of public transportation needs to be changed. Climate is no more of a problem in Montana than Buffalo, New York.

- The group believed MDT could best support and promote public transportation with the following actions:

    - Helping local transit agencies to develop business and marketing plans and to coordinate with other existing public transportation services.

    - Coordinating with the Public Service Commission.

    - Having a staff person at the state level work to address the needs of nontraditional transportation modes.

    - Publishing a master bus schedule of all the major carriers. This could be in a print or electronic format.

    - Addressing public transportation needs when highway improvements are made.

- The concept of establishing minimum acceptable levels of transit solicited the following comments:

    - Clarify minimum acceptable levels and tell us how it will be interfaced with grants.

- Local decision makers and transportation systems should set the standards, not the state.

- All modes should be subject to minimum standards, it appears that public transportation is treated differently.

2. Intercity Passenger Services

- For intercity passenger service, investigate the high speed trains that have been used in other countries.

3. Funding

- We should not view transit as competing with highways for funding. Rather, funding should look at ways highway and transit projects can compliment one another. As the system is presently set up, it would be hard for non-traditional modes to compete for dollars. Changes are required to make the competition process more equitable. MDT's role should be developing that mechanism to assure that public transportation projects receive fair review--the present law precludes this.

- Some local projects making applications under the Surface Transportation Program (STP) may be unable to come up with the required match.

- Local governments should determine how public transit dollars are spent, not the state. This needs to be stated in TranPlan21. Local funding decisions/allocations should not affect a city's ability to compete for state grants.

4. Improvements to Passenger Intermodal Facilities

- The proposal to improve publicly owned intermodal passenger facilities solicited these comments:

  - Intermodal facility rehabilitation must address improvements in lighting, parking, and ramps for persons with disabilities.

  - There is a need to preserve the platforms on the southern rail route, just in case Amtrak is reactivated.

5. Improvements to Social Service Passenger Service

- The proposal to improve service to disadvantaged and social service passengers solicited the following comments:
    - Coordination is best improved at the local level. There are initiatives already underway aimed at improving coordination.
    - The biggest problem for these passengers is service in the rural areas. In urban areas funding and service levels are okay.
    - Providing coordination assistance would be the top priority. If MDT chooses to coordinate services for this population, it should look at developing a demonstration project and if it is successful, it could be implemented in other parts of the state.

6. Transportation Demand Management

- The proposal to implement transportation demand management received the following comment:
    - Public transit programs should not be held responsible to incorporate transportation demand management strategies into their transit development plans. The role of TDM and the responsibilities for implementation should be established by the urban area planning processes.

E. STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCY

Nine individuals attended the state and federal agency focus group meeting. Representatives from the Forest Service, State Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Conservation, Commerce, Fish Wildlife and Parks, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal Environmental Protection Agency, and Federal Highway Administration were present.

The stakeholders provided the following comments on the policy papers and plan alternatives:

1. Planning and Coordination

- Address existing gaps in linking the interstate and primary systems with Forest Service roads. There must be access to county roads, good directional signage, and these arterial routes must be maintained. Therefore, MDT should coordinate closely with federal agencies.

- Environmental considerations must be factored into all planning processes. Greater attention and reference should be made to the key factors generating environmental impacts and to the different processes which are being implemented to address environmental issues. This includes the recently prepared memorandum of understanding involving state and federal resource agencies and the MDT.

- Although preservation and quality of life are recognized as local issues, it should be stated somewhere in the plan.

- The existing financial district law creates impediments which must be addressed.

2. Economic Development

- The city park/rest area program may be popular, but does it produce the desired economic benefits for the community? Have there been any feasibility studies conducted?

3. Freight Mobility

- There is a lack of representation at the federal level and this is harming Montana's rail transportation system. MDT needs to have an in-house modal expert to monitor rail mergers, keep abreast of federal legislation and regulations, and be represented at the Interstate Commerce Commission.

- Burlington Northern does not maintain their routes, so there must be an enforcement mechanism to address this.

- MDT needs to address rail service into Canada.

4. Access Management

- Access management must be addressed in certain areas, but not all parts of the state should be required to develop access management plans. In order for access management to work, MDT is going to need a broad support base.

- The Department of State Lands submitted written comment regarding access management: "State Lands primary interest is access management and land use. We want access management to be maintained or improved on state lands. State Lands personnel need to be involved in land use and access planning when their lands are affected."

5. Land Use

- Some stakeholders thought that the state should not be involved in land use planning, however, others believe MDT has a vested interest in being involved and they gave the example of the Gallatin Canyon.

6. Public Transportation and Intercity Passenger Service

- Air service in northeastern communities is very costly--it is cheaper for people to drive into the larger airports to make connecting flights. Air service is crucial to those areas, and this must be acknowledged in the plan.

IV. TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS' ISSUES

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Presentations of the plan alternatives and the policy papers were made to the seven tribal governments in Montana. This section reports the comments made by the tribal governments and their representatives. Written comment was also received and is reproduced in Appendix B.

A. ASSINIBOINE AND GROS VENTRE TRIBAL COUNCIL

Three tribal council members, Wesley Main, John Healy, the Fort Belknap transportation planning specialist, five county commissioners from Blaine and Phillips Counties, and Harlan Mount attended the meeting in Harlan. The following comments were recorded:

1. Planning and Coordination

- Frustration was expressed regarding the restrictions that affect federal funding for the Tribes. State and county governments should work together to address this problem.

- Participants did not want any new taxes for transportation infrastructure.

2. Roadways

- Concern about the effect of TranPlan 21 on highway improvements through the reservation, for example on Montana 66.

- Pavement design problems need to be addressed for future projects.

B. ASSINIBOINE AND SIOUX TRIBAL COUNCIL

Assiniboine and Sioux Tribal Council members present at a meeting in Fort Peck included: Gene Culbertson, Tribal Council Chairman and five council members.

The following comments were made:

- The Tribal Council wanted better roads and felt that other transportation services were adequate. There was some interest in bus and rail services, however, the consensus was that this service could be subsidized.

C. BLACKFEET TRIBAL COUNCIL

Members of the Blackfeet Tribal Council and their key staff attended a meeting in Browning. They included: Tom Thompson, Blackfeet Tribal Council, Gabe Grant, Blackfeet Tribal Council, and Ron Bird, Transportation Planing Director.

The following comments were recorded:

- The main concerns expressed were unrelated to TranPlan 21 and involved labor issues on highway construction projects.

- There was interest in the policy papers and plan alternatives.

D. CHIPPEWA AND CREE TRIBAL COUNCIL

The Chippewa Cree Tribal Council was briefed on the policy papers and the plan alternatives at Box Elder. In attendance were: John Sun Child, Chairman, Alvin Windy Boy, Joe Big Knife, Duncan Standing Rock, Richard Sangrey, Tribal Staff and Pete Lemere, Tribal Staff.

The following comments were recorded:

1. Roadways

- The Tribal Council expressed an interest in the Scenic Byway program, especially if funds were available to make improvements.

2. Economic Development

- The Tribe is interested in contracting with the Montana Department of Transportation to maintain rest areas.

3. Public Transportation/Intercity Passenger Service

- The essential air service to Havre is important, but there is a need for better connections in Billings.

E. CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBAL COUNCIL

The Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council were briefed on the plan alternatives and policy papers in Pablo. Present at that meeting were the following council members: Donal Dupuis, Fred Matt, Hank Baylor, Joseph Dupuis, Louis Adams, Michael Pablo, Chair, Rhonda Swaney, Vice Chair, and Sonny Morigeau.

The following comments were provided:

- Issues of safety are extremely important to the tribes. High value is placed on life.
- Access management is needed and MDT should be working actively with the tribes and neighboring jurisdictions. A land use plan is being prepared for the reservation which will provide a good basis for coordination.
- Environmental protection and preservation of the quality of life are both important goals.
- Action is needed now for corridor management and Highway 93 should be put on the fast track.
- Members noted the Tribal Council will submit detailed comments on the plan alternatives and policy papers in writing.

F. CROW TRIBAL COUNCIL

The Crow Tribal Council and their staff were briefed on the plan alternatives and the policy papers at Crow Agency.

The Following comments were made:

- Roadways
  - The number one concern was safety.

- Participants supported speed and weight enforcements, widening and shoulder enhancements for non-motorized vehicles, more signing for highways and the city/park rest area program.

G. NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBAL COUNCIL

The Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council and their staff were briefed on the plan alternatives and the policy papers in Lame Deer.

- Roadways
  - Safety was a major concern.
  - There were a number of project specific comments.
  - Lack of adequate maintenance on reservation roads was a concern.

V. WRITTEN COMMENTS

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In addition to comment provided in the meetings, MDT received written comment from individuals and organizations. Comments received by November 22 are available in Appendix B. All were initially invited to a focus group meeting and either could not attend or provided written comment in addition to their comments at the meeting. There were also calls on the TranPlan 21 hotline.

A. PUBLIC SECTOR COMMENTS

Written comments were received from the following public sector agencies:

- Great Falls City-County Planning Board, John Mooney, Director.
- Missoula City-County Office of Community Development, Mark Landkammer, Transportation Planner.
- Missoula Department of Public Works, Karen Fullet Jaworsky, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator.
- Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks, Bob Walker, State Trails Coordinator.
- Public Service Commission, Wayne Budt, Administrator.
- State Historic Preservation Office, Marcella Sherfy, Preservation Officer.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, John Wardell.
- U.S. Forest Service, Beryl Johnston.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kemp McMaster, Montana Field Supervisor.

B. WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM CITIZEN GROUPS

Written comments were received from the following special interest groups:

- Alternative Energy Resources Organization, Paul Reichert, Program Coordinator.
- Bicycle Federation of America, John Williams.
- Citizens for a Better Flathead, Bruce Boody, Judy Cornell, Co-Chairs.
- Flathead Valley Bicycle Club, Check Haney.
- Glacier Cyclery, Ron R. & Jan Brunk, Owners.
- Missoula Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Board, Winnie Schreiber.

- Montana Independent Living Project, Raelen Willard, Information Officer.
- North Valley Trails Council, Michael Kane, President.
- Scenic Preservation Committee of Citizens for a Better Flathead, Clair Strickler, Secretary.

C. WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM TRANSPORTATION STAKEHOLDERS

Written comments were received from the following organizations and individuals:

- Montana Motor Carriers Association, Ben Havdahl, Executive Vice-President.
- TransSystems, Inc., Mike Rice, President.

D. WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM MONTANA CITIZENS

Written comments were received from the following citizens:

- Frances Coover, Missoula.
- Robert Hakey, Lewistown.
- Marcia Hums
- Russell Johnson, Michele Hebert, Bozeman.
- Cedron Jones, Helena.
- Mary Meagher
- Helen Pederson, Libby.
- Mary Yuricic, Helena.

E. TELEPHONE COMMENTS FROM MONTANA CITIZENS

Eight telephone comments were received on the toll-free hotline.

Appendix A
Public Involvement Checklist Results
Helena

N=17[5]

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
PLAN ALTERNATIVES						
Alternative 1: No Policy Change - Declining Service Levels			2	5	8	
Alternative 2: Preserving the Current System and Undertaking Limited New Initiatives.	3	7	1	4		
Alternative 3: Maintaining Current Level of Mobility by Increasing Travel Options Where Cost Effective and Improving Intermodal Connections.	12	5				
Alternative 4: Developing a High Service Transportation System.	5	2	4	4		
POLICY CHOICES						
ROADWAY CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A. - Establish Priorities for Roadway Improvements	1	6	2	1		
Action A.1. Maintain current procedures.	1	5	1	5		
Action A.2. Establish the following priorities: 1) Preservation of Montana's Highway System, 2) Safety Improvements 3) Capacity Expansion, and 4) Other Improvements.	5	8	2	1	1	

[5]Seventeen individuals returned the checklist. They did not necessarily respond to all questions.

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL B. - Modernize Montana's Highway Infrastructure	1	8	2			
Action B.1. Review the Geometric Design Standards.	3	5	5			
Action B.2. Undertake right-of-way preservation in growing corridors.	6	6	3			
POLICY GOAL C - Identify and Deploy Cost-Effective Intelligent Vehicle Highway System (IVHS) Applications To Improve Safety and Capacity	1	4	6			
Action C.1. Deploy advanced vehicle technologies in lieu of highway system improvements to improve safety and capacity.		6	8			
Action C.2. Prioritize system preservation and maintenance.	6	7	1			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A: Ensure the transportation system provides cost effective access for Montana's export oriented industry to market.	6	6	1			
Action A.1. Work with shippers and private providers to identify access improvements.	5	10	2		1	
Action A.2. Prioritize support for export industries.	4	5	6	2	1	
Action A.3. Work with commercial air carriers to maintain existing levels of service.	6	11	2			
POLICY GOAL B: Ensure Economic Development Priorities are Factored into Transportation Planning and Programming	3	9	2	1		
Action B.1. Coordinate with the Department of Commerce.	5	8	3			
Action B.2. Establish a city park and rest area program to encourage visitors to contribute to economic development.	7	8	1	1		
POLICY GOAL C: Engage in multistate and regional initiatives that facilitate international trade.	5	8	1			
Action C.1. Participate in examination of multistate trade corridors.	5	9	3			
Action C.2. Coordinate planning with Canadian Provincial governments.	6	9	2			

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL D: Promote tourism and access to recreational destinations.	9	6	2	2		
Action D.1. Prioritize transportation enhancements that promote tourist access.	4	7	4	3		
Action D.2. Provide signage for tourism-related activities and minimize billboards.	9	6	2	2		
FREIGHT MOBILITY CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A - Ensure Efficient Highway Freight Mobility	3	6	1			
Action A.1. Prioritize improvements in highway freight corridors.	2	10	3			
Action A.2. Address impediments to efficient movement on highway freight corridors.	1	11	3			
Action A.3. Ensure freight corridors are addressed by local and regional planning.	5	11	1			
Action A.4. Ensure that Montana's border crossing needs are met.	5	9	1			
POLICY GOAL B - Ensure a Balanced Freight System by Preserving the Existing Rail and Air System.	1	6	1			
Action B.1. Preserve threatened branch lines.	5	5	6	1		
Option B.1.a. Take no action			4	5	4	
Option B.1.b. Work with the railroad industry to facilitate the preservation of branch lines.	6	10	1			
Option B.1.c. Provide financial support for the maintenance of threatened branch lines based upon strict criteria.	3	3	7	4		
Option B.1.d. Purchase the rights of way, maintain the track and lease the use of branch lines threatened with closure.	4	5	5	4	1	
Action B.2. Improve the performance of Montana's freight rail system	3	7	3			
Option B.2.a. Take no action.		2	3	2	5	
Option B.2.b. Fund improvements that will make significant increases in freight rail performance in key freight corridors.	4	6	6			

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
Action B.3. Address priority grade separation needs at busy railroad crossings.	2	11	3			
Action B.4. Retain existing rights of way in rail corridors.	6	8	3			
POLICY GOAL C - Improve Intermodal Connectivity Through Increased use of Intermodal Freight Facilities	2	7	1			
Action C.1. Encourage the use of and improve the performance of existing intermodal facilities.	4	12	2			
Action C.2. Encourage the use of existing truck/rail reload facilities.	4	14				
Action C.3. Determine the feasibility of state provision of rail cars.	4	3	4	4	2	1
Action C.4. Ensure MDT has in-house modal expertise to address freight issues associated with Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) requirements.	4	6	5	1		
ACCESS MANAGEMENT CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Retain the existing Access Management Plan Approach.		2	2	7		1
Action A.1. Do not regulate highway access further.		1	2	10	2	
POLICY OPTION B: Strengthen use of access controls in fast growing areas.	6	8				
Action B.1. Establish a classification scheme for access management.	3	12	2			
POLICY OPTION C: Develop and implement a comprehensive access management plan.	3	7				
Action C.1. Identify areas and corridors within the State that require rapid action and pursue a "jump start" program to address them.	6	7	4			
Action C.2. Identify corridors likely to require expansion or reconfiguration for access management purposes.	6	10	1			
POLICY D: Establish and fund a level of travel demand forecasting that will support an access management program.	2	9	3		1	

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
LAND USE CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Do not address land use on a case by case basis.	2	2	1	9	3	
POLICY OPTION B: Encourage local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning to manage transportation demand.	8	9		1		
Action B.1. Work with local jurisdictions to establish a consistent approach.	5	11	2			
Action B.2. Establish and fund technical assistance for local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning.	6	9		1	1	
POLICY OPTION C: Provide authority to require developers to pay for resulting traffic demands.	8	7	3			
POLICY OPTION D: Enact legislation supporting land use planning in fast growing counties.	7	5	5			
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A: Support Increased Use of Public Transportation Systems	5	3	4			
Action A.1. Develop promotional/educational programs to publicize public transportation opportunities.	4	8	5			
Action A.2. Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.	8	7	3			
Action A.3. Provide state-level funding support for transit.	4	5	7			
Option A.3.a. Allow transit projects to compete with highway improvement for funding.	2	5	5	4		
POLICY GOAL B: Preserve Existing Intercity Public Transportation Service.	1	9				
Action B.1. Identify the most effective actions.	6	8	2			
Action B.2. Evaluate the costs and feasibility of funding new intercity service in unserved areas.	5	9	1	1		
Action B.3. Implement a "rural ridesharing" demonstration program.	5	9	2	1		1
Action B.4. Improve intermodal passenger facilities.	4	7	5			
Action B.5. Coordinate with Amtrak to facilitate increased use of rail and preservation of existing service levels.	5	10	3			

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL C: Improve Service to Social Service Passengers.	1	7	3	1		
Action C.1. Ensure state agencies coordinate service provision.	4	7	2	1		
Action C.2. Investigate the need to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision.	4	7	4	1		
POLICY GOAL D: Implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Actions that will Work in Montana.	3	2	4	1		
Action D.1. Encourage transit providers to include demand-side strategies in their development plans.	5	7	4	1		
Action D.2. Work with other state agencies to develop a TDM program for state government.	7	6	4	1		
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Institutionalize Bicycle and Pedestrian Modes.	6	3	1	2		
Action A.1. Develop the State Bicycle and Pedestrian program.	7	3	4	1		
Action A.2. Prepare a bicycle related tourist guide.	4	9	2	2		
Action A.3. Establish an advisory committee.	6	6	1	2	1	
Action A.4. Disseminate public service announcements addressing bicycle and pedestrian safety.	5	9	1	1		1
POLICY GOAL B: Make Targeted Bicycle-related Improvements.	6	4	2			
Action B.1. Identify a network of bicycle routes to provide the basis for planning and system improvement decisions.	9	5	1	1		1
Action B.2. Improve bicycle facilities in Montana	8	4	3			1
Action B.3. Adopt and implement consistent bicycle-friendly maintenance standards.	9	7	1			
Action B.4. Preserve the designated bicycle network in a generally smooth, clean, and safe condition.	8	7		1		

Montana Department of Transportation

Appendix A
Public Involvement Checklist Results
Kalispell

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N=6[6]

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
PLAN ALTERNATIVES						
Alternative 1: No Policy Change - Declining Service Levels				2	3	
Alternative 2: Preserving the Current System and Undertaking Limited New Initiatives.	1	3		1		
Alternative 3: Maintaining Current Level of Mobility by Increasing Travel Options Where Cost Effective and Improving Intermodal Connections.	4	2				
Alternative 4: Developing a High Service Transportation System.	2	1		2		
POLICY CHOICES						
ROADWAY CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A. - Establish Priorities for Roadway Improvements	3	1				
Action A.1. Maintain current procedures.		1	2	3		
Action A.2. Establish the following priorities: 1) Preservation of Montana's Highway System, 2) Safety Improvements 3) Capacity Expansion, and 4) Other Improvements.	1	3	1			

[6]Six individuals returned the checklist. They did not necessarily respond to all questions.

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL B. - Modernize Montana's Highway Infrastructure	1	2				
Action B.1. Review the Geometric Design Standards.	1	2	2			
Action B.2. Undertake right-of-way preservation in growing corridors.	5					
POLICY GOAL C - Identify and Deploy Cost-Effective Intelligent Vehicle Highway System (IVHS) Applications To Improve Safety and Capacity	2	2	1			
Action C.1. Deploy advanced vehicle technologies in lieu of highway system improvements to improve safety and capacity.	1	1	1	2		
Action C.2. Prioritize system preservation and maintenance.	4	1				
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A: Ensure the transportation system provides cost effective access for Montana's export oriented industry to market.	3	1				
Action A.1. Work with shippers and private providers to identify access improvements.	3	2				
Action A.2. Prioritize support for export industries.	2	5				
Action A.3. Work with commercial air carriers to maintain existing levels of service.	1	4				
POLICY GOAL B: Ensure Economic Development Priorities are Factored into Transportation Planning and Programming	3	1				
Action B.1. Coordinate with the Department of Commerce.	3	1		1		
Action B.2. Establish a city park and rest area program to encourage visitors to contribute to economic development.	2	2	1			
POLICY GOAL C: Engage in multistate and regional initiatives that facilitate international trade.	4					
Action C.1. Participate in examination of multistate trade corridors.	4	1				
Action C.2. Coordinate planning with Canadian Provincial governments.	4	1				

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL D: Promote tourism and access to recreational destinations.	1	1	1			
Action D.1. Prioritize transportation enhancements that promote tourist access.	2	3				
Action D.2. Provide signage for tourism-related activities and minimize billboards.	3	2				
FREIGHT MOBILITY CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A - Ensure Efficient Highway Freight Mobility	1	2				
Action A.1. Prioritize improvements in highway freight corridors.	3	2				
Action A.2. Address impediments to efficient movement on highway freight corridors.	3	2				
Action A.3. Ensure freight corridors are addressed by local and regional planning.	4	1				
Action A.4. Ensure that Montana's border crossing needs are met.	4	1				
POLICY GOAL B - Ensure a Balanced Freight System by Preserving the Existing Rail and Air System.	1	1	1			
Action B.1. Preserve threatened branch lines.		2	1			
Option B.1.a. Take no action			1		2	
Option B.1.b. Work with the railroad industry to facilitate the preservation of branch lines.	1	2	1			
Option B.1.c. Provide financial support for the maintenance of threatened branch lines based upon strict criteria.		1		1	1	
Option B.1.d. Purchase the rights of way, maintain the track and lease the use of branch lines threatened with closure.		1	2	2		
Action B.2. Improve the performance of Montana's freight rail system		1	1			
Option B.2.a. Take no action.			1	1	2	
Option B.2.b. Fund improvements that will make significant increases in freight rail performance in key freight corridors.		2		1	1	

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
Action B.3. Address priority grade separation needs at busy railroad crossings.	2	1		1		
Action B.4. Retain existing rights of way in rail corridors.	1	3				
POLICY GOAL C - Improve Intermodal Connectivity Through Increased use of Intermodal Freight Facilities	1	3				
Action C.1. Encourage the use of and improve the performance of existing intermodal facilities.	2	3				
Action C.2. Encourage the use of existing truck/rail reload facilities.	3	1	1			
Action C.3. Determine the feasibility of state provision of rail cars.		1	2	1	1	
Action C.4. Ensure MDT has in-house modal expertise to address freight issues associated with Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) requirements.	1	4				
ACCESS MANAGEMENT CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Retain the existing Access Management Plan Approach.		1	2	1	1	
Action A.1. Do not regulate highway access further.			1	3		
POLICY OPTION B: Strengthen use of access controls in fast growing areas.	4	1				
Action B.1. Establish a classification scheme for access management.	3	1	1			
POLICY OPTION C: Develop and implement a comprehensive access management plan.	6					
Action C.1. Identify areas and corridors within the State that require rapid action and pursue a "jump start" program to address them.	5					
Action C.2. Identify corridors likely to require expansion or reconfiguration for access management purposes.	4	1				
POLICY D: Establish and fund a level of travel demand forecasting that will support an access management program.	2	2				

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
LAND USE CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Do not address land use on a case by case basis.			1	1	2	
POLICY OPTION B: Encourage local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning to manage transportation demand.	5	1				
Action B.1. Work with local jurisdictions to establish a consistent approach.	5	1				
Action B.2. Establish and fund technical assistance for local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning.	3		1	2		
POLICY OPTION C: Provide authority to require developers to pay for resulting traffic demands.	5			1		
POLICY OPTION D: Enact legislation supporting land use planning in fast growing counties.	4		1	1		
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A: Support Increased Use of Public Transportation Systems	4	1				
Action A.1. Develop promotional/educational programs to publicize public transportation opportunities.	2	4				
Action A.2. Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.	2	4				
Action A.3. Provide state-level funding support for transit.	1	1	1	3		
Option A.3.a. Allow transit projects to compete with highway improvement for funding.	1	1	1	1	1	
POLICY GOAL B: Preserve Existing Intercity Public Transportation Service.	1	2	1			
Action B.1. Identify the most effective actions.	2	3				
Action B.2. Evaluate the costs and feasibility of funding new intercity service in unserved areas.	1	3		1		
Action B.3. Implement a "rural ridesharing" demonstration program.	3	1	1			
Action B.4. Improve intermodal passenger facilities.	4	1				
Action B.5. Coordinate with Amtrak to facilitate increased use of rail and preservation of existing service levels.	3	1		1		

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL C: Improve Service to Social Service Passengers.	1	2	1			
Action C.1. Ensure state agencies coordinate service provision.	1	4				
Action C.2. Investigate the need to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision.	1	2	2			
POLICY GOAL D: Implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Actions that will Work in Montana.	1	1	2			
Action D.1. Encourage transit providers to include demand-side strategies in their development plans.	1	4				
Action D.2. Work with other state agencies to develop a TDM program for state government.	1	4	1			
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Institutionalize Bicycle and Pedestrian Modes.	2	2				
Action A.1. Develop the State Bicycle and Pedestrian program.	3	1	1			
Action A.2. Prepare a bicycle related tourist guide.	3	1		1		
Action A.3. Establish an advisory committee.	3	2				
Action A.4. Disseminate public service announcements addressing bicycle and pedestrian safety.	2	1	1	1		
POLICY GOAL B: Make Targeted Bicycle-related Improvements.	1	3				
Action B.1. Identify a network of bicycle routes to provide the basis for planning and system improvement decisions.	2	5				
Action B.2. Improve bicycle facilities in Montana	2	3				
Action B.3. Adopt and implement consistent bicycle-friendly maintenance standards.	2	3				
Action B.4. Preserve the designated bicycle network in a generally smooth, clean, and safe condition.	2	3				

Montana Department of Transportation

Appendix A
Public Involvement Checklist Results
Miles City

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N=4[7]

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
PLAN ALTERNATIVES						
Alternative 1: No Policy Change - Declining Service Levels		1		1	1	
Alternative 2: Preserving the Current System and Undertaking Limited New Initiatives.	1	1		1		
Alternative 3: Maintaining Current Level of Mobility by Increasing Travel Options Where Cost Effective and Improving Intermodal Connections.	1	2				
Alternative 4: Developing a High Service Transportation System.	2		1			
POLICY CHOICES						
ROADWAY CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A. - Establish Priorities for Roadway Improvements	1	2				
Action A.1. Maintain current procedures.		1	1			1
Action A.2. Establish the following priorities: 1) Preservation of Montana's Highway System, 2) Safety Improvements 3) Capacity Expansion, and 4) Other Improvements.	1	2				

[7]Four individuals returned the checklist. They did not necessarily respond to all questions.

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL B. - Modernize Montana's Highway Infrastructure		3				
Action B.1. Review the Geometric Design Standards.	1	2				
Action B.2. Undertake right-of-way preservation in growing corridors.		1	1			
POLICY GOAL C - Identify and Deploy Cost-Effective Intelligent Vehicle Highway System (IVHS) Applications To Improve Safety and Capacity		3				
Action C.1. Deploy advanced vehicle technologies in lieu of highway system improvements to improve safety and capacity.	1	1	1			
Action C.2. Prioritize system preservation and maintenance.		3				
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A: Ensure the transportation system provides cost effective access for Montana's export oriented industry to market.		3				
Action A.1. Work with shippers and private providers to identify access improvements.		2				1
Action A.2. Prioritize support for export industries.		2				1
Action A.3. Work with commercial air carriers to maintain existing levels of service.	1	2				
POLICY GOAL B: Ensure Economic Development Priorities are Factored into Transportation Planning and Programming	1	2				
Action B.1. Coordinate with the Department of Commerce.		3				
Action B.2. Establish a city park and rest area program to encourage visitors to contribute to economic development.		2	1			
POLICY GOAL C: Engage in multistate and regional initiatives that facilitate international trade.	2	1				
Action C.1. Participate in examination of multistate trade corridors.	1	2				
Action C.2. Coordinate planning with Canadian Provincial governments.	2	1				

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL D: Promote tourism and access to recreational destinations.	2	1				
Action D.1. Prioritize transportation enhancements that promote tourist access.	2	1				
Action D.2. Provide signage for tourism-related activities and minimize billboards.	2	1				
FREIGHT MOBILITY CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A - Ensure Efficient Highway Freight Mobility		3				
Action A.1. Prioritize improvements in highway freight corridors.		3				
Action A.2. Address impediments to efficient movement on highway freight corridors.		3				
Action A.3. Ensure freight corridors are addressed by local and regional planning.		3				
Action A.4. Ensure that Montana's border crossing needs are met.		3				
POLICY GOAL B - Ensure a Balanced Freight System by Preserving the Existing Rail and Air System.	2	1				
Action B.1. Preserve threatened branch lines.	2	1				
Option B.1.a. Take no action				1	1	
Option B.1.b. Work with the railroad industry to facilitate the preservation of branch lines.	1	1	1			
Option B.1.c. Provide financial support for the maintenance of threatened branch lines based upon strict criteria.		2	1			
Option B.1.d. Purchase the rights of way, maintain the track and lease the use of branch lines threatened with closure.		2	1			
Action B.2. Improve the performance of Montana's freight rail system		3				
Option B.2.a. Take no action.				1	1	
Option B.2.b. Fund improvements that will make significant increases in freight rail performance in key freight corridors.		3				

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
Action B.3. Address priority grade separation needs at busy railroad crossings.		3				
Action B.4. Retain existing rights of way in rail corridors.		3				
POLICY GOAL C - Improve Intermodal Connectivity Through Increased use of Intermodal Freight Facilities	1	2				
Action C.1. Encourage the use of and improve the performance of existing intermodal facilities.	1	2				
Action C.2. Encourage the use of existing truck/rail reload facilities.	1	2				
Action C.3. Determine the feasibility of state provision of rail cars.	1	2				
Action C.4. Ensure MDT has in-house modal expertise to address freight issues associated with Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) requirements.	1	2				
ACCESS MANAGEMENT CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Retain the existing Access Management Plan Approach.	1		1			
Action A.1. Do not regulate highway access further.		1		1		
POLICY OPTION B: Strengthen use of access controls in fast growing areas.	1		1			
Action B.1. Establish a classification scheme for access management.		1	1			
POLICY OPTION C: Develop and implement a comprehensive access management plan.	1		1			
Action C.1. Identify areas and corridors within the State that require rapid action and pursue a "jump start" program to address them.		1	1			
Action C.2. Identify corridors likely to require expansion or reconfiguration for access management purposes.		1	1			
POLICY D: Establish and fund a level of travel demand forecasting that will support an access management program.	1		2			

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
LAND USE CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Do not address land use on a case by case basis.				1		1
POLICY OPTION B: Encourage local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning to manage transportation demand.	1	1				1
Action B.1. Work with local jurisdictions to establish a consistent approach.		2				1
Action B.2. Establish and fund technical assistance for local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning.		1				1
POLICY OPTION C: Provide authority to require developers to pay for resulting traffic demands.	1	1				1
POLICY OPTION D: Enact legislation supporting land use planning in fast growing counties.	1	1				1
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A: Support Increased Use of Public Transportation Systems	1	2				
Action A.1. Develop promotional/educational programs to publicize public transportation opportunities.	1	2				
Action A.2. Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.	2	1				
Action A.3. Provide state-level funding support for transit.	2	1				
Option A.3.a. Allow transit projects to compete with highway improvement for funding.	1	2				
POLICY GOAL B: Preserve Existing Intercity Public Transportation Service.		1	1			
Action B.1. Identify the most effective actions.	2	1				
Action B.2. Evaluate the costs and feasibility of funding new intercity service in unserved areas.	1	2				
Action B.3. Implement a "rural ridesharing" demonstration program.	2	1				
Action B.4. Improve intermodal passenger facilities.	2	1				
Action B.5. Coordinate with Amtrak to facilitate increased use of rail and preservation of existing service levels.	1	1	1			

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL C: Improve Service to Social Service Passengers.	1	1	1			
Action C.1. Ensure state agencies coordinate service provision.	1	1	1			
Action C.2. Investigate the need to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision.	1	1	1			
POLICY GOAL D: Implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Actions that will Work in Montana.		2	1			
Action D.1. Encourage transit providers to include demand-side strategies in their development plans.		2	1			
Action D.2. Work with other state agencies to develop a TDM program for state government.		3				
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Institutionalize Bicycle and Pedestrian Modes.		3				
Action A.1. Develop the State Bicycle and Pedestrian program.		3				
Action A.2. Prepare a bicycle related tourist guide.		2				1
Action A.3. Establish an advisory committee.		3				
Action A.4. Disseminate public service announcements addressing bicycle and pedestrian safety.		2				
POLICY GOAL B: Make Targeted Bicycle-related Improvements.		2				1
Action B.1. Identify a network of bicycle routes to provide the basis for planning and system improvement decisions.		3				
Action B.2. Improve bicycle facilities in Montana		1	1			1
Action B.3. Adopt and implement consistent bicycle-friendly maintenance standards.		2	1			
Action B.4. Preserve the designated bicycle network in a generally smooth, clean, and safe condition.		3				

Montana Department of Transportation

Appendix A
Public Involvement Checklist Results
Missoula

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N=15[8]

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
PLAN ALTERNATIVES						
Alternative 1: No Policy Change - Declining Service Levels			1	1	10	
Alternative 2: Preserving the Current System and Undertaking Limited New Initiatives.		3	1	5	2	
Alternative 3: Maintaining Current Level of Mobility by Increasing Travel Options Where Cost Effective and Improving Intermodal Connections.	8	4	1			
Alternative 4: Developing a High Service Transportation System.	5	2	1	2		
POLICY CHOICES						
ROADWAY CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A. - Establish Priorities for Roadway Improvements	3	3		2		
Action A.1. Maintain current procedures.		2	1	6		
Action A.2. Establish the following priorities: 1) Preservation of Montana's Highway System, 2) Safety Improvements 3) Capacity Expansion, and 4) Other Improvements.	6	5		2		

[8]Fifteen individuals returned the checklist. They did not necessarily respond to all questions.

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL B. - Modernize Montana's Highway Infrastructure	2	7				
Action B.1. Review the Geometric Design Standards.		9	1	1		
Action B.2. Undertake right-of-way preservation in growing corridors.	7	3	1			
POLICY GOAL C - Identify and Deploy Cost-Effective Intelligent Vehicle Highway System (IVHS) Applications To Improve Safety and Capacity		5	1	2		
Action C.1. Deploy advanced vehicle technologies in lieu of highway system improvements to improve safety and capacity.	1	6	5	2		
Action C.2. Prioritize system preservation and maintenance.	6	3	2	1		
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A: Ensure the transportation system provides cost effective access for Montana's export oriented industry to market.	4	4	1			
Action A.1. Work with shippers and private providers to identify access improvements.	3	5	2			
Action A.2. Prioritize support for export industries.	3	4	3			
Action A.3. Work with commercial air carriers to maintain existing levels of service.	3	5	2			
POLICY GOAL B: Ensure Economic Development Priorities are Factored into Transportation Planning and Programming	3	4				
Action B.1. Coordinate with the Department of Commerce.	2	5	1			
Action B.2. Establish a city park and rest area program to encourage visitors to contribute to economic development.	5	4	1			
POLICY GOAL C: Engage in multistate and regional initiatives that facilitate international trade.	2	3	1	1		
Action C.1. Participate in examination of multistate trade corridors.	3	4	1	1		
Action C.2. Coordinate planning with Canadian Provincial governments.	3	5		1		

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL D: Promote tourism and access to recreational destinations.	3	3	1	2		
Action D.1. Prioritize transportation enhancements that promote tourist access.	6	1	1	1		
Action D.2. Provide signage for tourism-related activities and minimize billboards.	10					
FREIGHT MOBILITY CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A - Ensure Efficient Highway Freight Mobility	2	3		1		
Action A.1. Prioritize improvements in highway freight corridors.	2	4	2	1		
Action A.2. Address impediments to efficient movement on highway freight corridors.	2	3	3	1		
Action A.3. Ensure freight corridors are addressed by local and regional planning.	4	1	1	2		1
Action A.4. Ensure that Montana's border crossing needs are met.	1	4	2	1		1
POLICY GOAL B - Ensure a Balanced Freight System by Preserving the Existing Rail and Air System.	1	5				
Action B.1. Preserve threatened branch lines.	5	3	1	1		
Option B.1.a. Take no action				5	2	
Option B.1.b. Work with the railroad industry to facilitate the preservation of branch lines.	3	4	2			
Option B.1.c. Provide financial support for the maintenance of threatened branch lines based upon strict criteria.	1	4	3		1	
Option B.1.d. Purchase the rights of way, maintain the track and lease the use of branch lines threatened with closure.	1	5	1	1	1	
Action B.2. Improve the performance of Montana's freight rail system	3	3	1			
Option B.2.a. Take no action.			2	3	4	
Option B.2.b. Fund improvements that will make significant increases in freight rail performance in key freight corridors.	1	7	1			

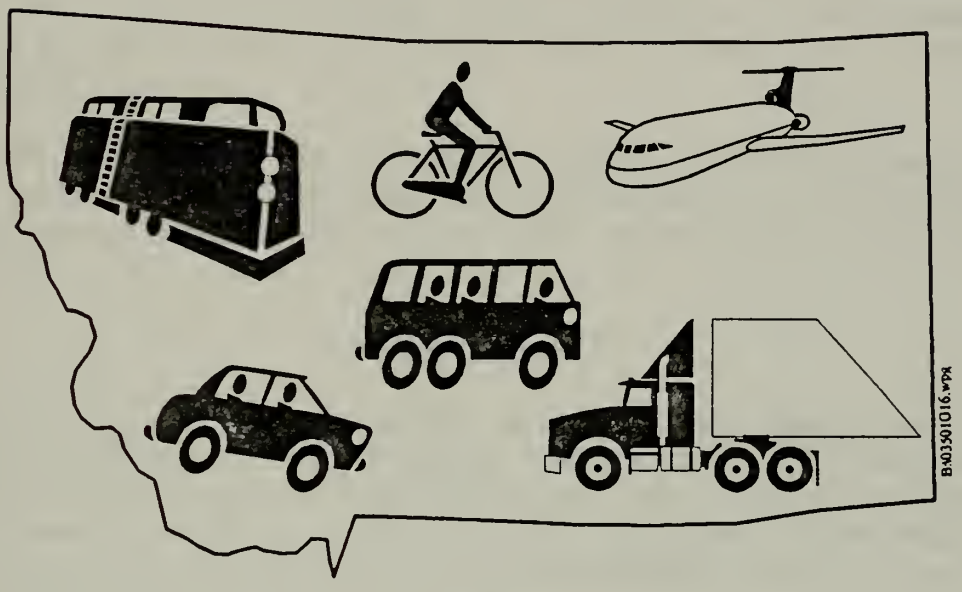
	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
Action B.3. Address priority grade separation needs at busy railroad crossings.	2	3			1	
Action B.4. Retain existing rights of way in rail corridors.	4	3	1		1	
POLICY GOAL C - Improve Intermodal Connectivity Through Increased use of Intermodal Freight Facilities	3	3				
Action C.1. Encourage the use of and improve the performance of existing intermodal facilities.	2	5	2			
Action C.2. Encourage the use of existing truck/rail reload facilities.	2	6	1			
Action C.3. Determine the feasibility of state provision of rail cars.	1	2	2	3		
Action C.4. Ensure MDT has in-house modal expertise to address freight issues associated with Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) requirements.	1	4	1	1		
ACCESS MANAGEMENT CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Retain the existing Access Management Plan Approach.		2	1	3	3	
Action A.1. Do not regulate highway access further.		2		4	5	
POLICY OPTION B: Strengthen use of access controls in fast growing areas.	2	6				
Action B.1. Establish a classification scheme for access management.	2	8	1			
POLICY OPTION C: Develop and implement a comprehensive access management plan.	7	3	2			
Action C.1. Identify areas and corridors within the State that require rapid action and pursue a "jump start" program to address them.	7	7				
Action C.2. Identify corridors likely to require expansion or reconfiguration for access management purposes.	4	8				
POLICY D: Establish and fund a level of travel demand forecasting that will support an access management program.	6	4	1	1		

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
LAND USE CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Do not address land use on a case by case basis.	1	2	2	1	3	
POLICY OPTION B: Encourage local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning to manage transportation demand.	6	4	1	1		
Action B.1. Work with local jurisdictions to establish a consistent approach.	7	5	1	1		
Action B.2. Establish and fund technical assistance for local jurisdictions to undertake land use planning.	7	4	1	2		
POLICY OPTION C: Provide authority to require developers to pay for resulting traffic demands.	10	3	1			
POLICY OPTION D: Enact legislation supporting land use planning in fast growing counties.	10	2	1	1		
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CHOICES						
POLICY GOAL A: Support Increased Use of Public Transportation Systems	5	2				
Action A.1. Develop promotional/educational programs to publicize public transportation opportunities.	5	6				
Action A.2. Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.	8	3				
Action A.3. Provide state-level funding support for transit.	7	1	1			
Option A.3.a. Allow transit projects to compete with highway improvement for funding.	2	4	3	2		
POLICY GOAL B: Preserve Existing Intercity Public Transportation Service.	2	5				
Action B.1. Identify the most effective actions.	5	3	2			
Action B.2. Evaluate the costs and feasibility of funding new intercity service in unserved areas.	5	3	1	1		
Action B.3. Implement a "rural ridesharing" demonstration program.	5	6				
Action B.4. Improve intermodal passenger facilities.	6	3	2			
Action B.5. Coordinate with Amtrak to facilitate increased use of rail and preservation of existing service levels.	8	2	1			

	Strongly Support	Support	Uncertain	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
POLICY GOAL C: Improve Service to Social Service Passengers.	6	4	1			
Action C.1. Ensure state agencies coordinate service provision.	5	5	1	1		
Action C.2. Investigate the need to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision.	5	4	2			
POLICY GOAL D: Implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Actions that will Work in Montana.	6	3		1		
Action D.1. Encourage transit providers to include demand-side strategies in their development plans.	6	3	1	1		
Action D.2. Work with other state agencies to develop a TDM program for state government.	6	3	1	1		
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CHOICES						
POLICY OPTION A: Institutionalize Bicycle and Pedestrian Modes.	5	4				
Action A.1. Develop the State Bicycle and Pedestrian program.	6	4				
Action A.2. Prepare a bicycle related tourist guide.	5	3	2			
Action A.3. Establish an advisory committee.	5	4	2			
Action A.4. Disseminate public service announcements addressing bicycle and pedestrian safety.	6	4				
POLICY GOAL B: Make Targeted Bicycle-related Improvements.	8	1				
Action B.1. Identify a network of bicycle routes to provide the basis for planning and system improvement decisions.	8	2				
Action B.2. Improve bicycle facilities in Montana	9	1				
Action B.3. Adopt and implement consistent bicycle-friendly maintenance standards.	8	2				
Action B.4. Preserve the designated bicycle network in a generally smooth, clean, and safe condition.	9	1				

Montana Department of Transportation

TranPlan 21



Public Opinion Survey Results

December 1994

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the methods and findings of a telephone survey conducted for the Montana Departmkent of Transportation. The purposes of the survey were to determine the opinion of Montana residents about the current state of transportation in Montana and to obtain the opinions of Montana residents about how to prioritize future action by the Montana Department of Transportation.

The survey was conducted with the 6 station Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing Laboratory at Montana State University, Billings from November 9, 1994 to November 18, 1994. Trained interviewers completed 710 interviews with randomly selected adult residents of Montana.

METHODOLOGY

A random digit dialing sampling technique was used to generate the sample. In order to complete 710 interviews, a total of 3,877 telephone calls were made to 2,723 telephone numbers. Table One shows the disposition of all the telephone calls. When a particular call resulted in no answer, an answering machine or was busy, the number was recalled up to five times in order to attempt to complete an interview. When a potential respondents said they were busy, the interviewer attempted to schedule a time for a call back.

TABLE ONE
DISPOSITIONS OF ALL TELEPHONE CALLS

No Answer	918	23.7%
Busy	261	6.7%
Answering Machine	347	9.0%
Fax or Computer	98	2.5%
Non Working Number	547	14.1%
Non Residential Number	182	4.7%
Hearing Problem	12	.3%
Language Problem	5	.1%
Incompetent Respondent	18	.5%
Refused	453	11.7%
Call Backs	295	7.6%
Wrong Category	15	.4%
Hung Up	12	.3%
Argumentative	4	.1%
Completed	710	18.3%

Upon completion of the interviews, the data was electronically transferred to the VAX mainframe computer at MSU, Billings. The computer program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to analyze the data

FINDINGS

The Respondents

Table Two summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents. As Table Two shows, the respondents were about half male and half female. Ages of respondents ranged from 18 to 88 with a mean of 44.8. Table Two shows that 37.7% of the respondents had received a college degree and another 29.2% had some college education. The mean educational level of the respondents was 14.1 years of formal education.

TABLE TWO
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sex

Male	352	49.8%
Female	355	50.2%

Age

18-25	60	8.6%
26-35	159	22.7%
36-45	176	25.2%
46-55	133	19.0%
56-65	87	12.4%
66-75	62	8.9%
Over 75	22	3.1%

Mean Age = 44.8

Educational Attainment

Not High School Grad	35	5.0%
High School Grad	233	33.1%
Some College	205	29.2%
College Grad	155	22.0%
Grad Work	75	10.7%

Mean Educational Level = 14.1

Born in Montana

Yes	366	52.0%
No	338	48.0%

How Long in Montana?

Less than 5 Years	54	16.0%
5-10	59	17.5%
11-20	77	22.8%
21-30	71	21.0%
31-40	31	9.2%
Over 40 Years	46	13.6%

Mean Years in Montana for Non Native Montanans = 20.9

Montana State Department of Transportation Financial District of Residence

District One	185	26.2%
District Two	133	18.8%
District Three	161	22.8%
District Four	63	8.9%
District Five	165	23.3%

Table Two shows that 52% of the respondents were born in Montana while 48% were not. The respondents who were not born in Montana were asked how long they had been in the state. Table Two shows the average length of time in the state for non native Montanans was 20.9 years.

Finally, Table Two shows that 26.2% of the respondents lived in Montana State Department of Transportation Financial District 1 (Lincoln, Flathead, Sanders, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, Granite, Powell, and Lake counties), 18.8% lived in State Transportation Financial District 2 (Beaverhead, Madison, Deer Lodge, Silverbow, Jefferson, Broadwater, Meagher, Gallatin, and Park counties), 22.8% lived in Financial District 3 (Glacier, Pondera, Teton, Lewis and Clark, Cascade, Toole, Chouteau, Liberty, Hill and Blaine counties), 8.9% lived in Financial District 4 (Phillips, Valley, Daniels, Sheridan, Roosevelt, Richland, McCone, Garfield, Dawson, Prairie, Rosebud, Fallon, Custer, Powder River, Carter, and Wibaux counties) and 23.3% lived in Financial District 5 (Bighorn, Treasure, Stillwater, Sweetgrass, Wheatland, Yellowstone, Golden Valley, Petroleum, Fergus, Musselshell, Judith Basin, and Carbon counties.

Respondent Perception of Transportation in Montana

The respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with 12 different components of transportation in Montana. In making these ratings, the respondents were asked to use a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 was very unsatisfied and 10 was very satisfied. Table Three summarizes the results of the ratings. The first number after each item in Table Three is the number of

respondents providing a rating for the item and the second number is the mean rating given the item. The order of items in Table Three is based on the mean score on the 1 to 10 scale.

TABLE THREE
RESPONDENT SATISFACTION WITH TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Interstate Highways	694	7.40
Shipping Freight	585	7.13
Out of State Air	577	6.69
Special Transportation	386	6.14
In State Air	393	5.72
Local Transit	254	5.57
Pedestrian Walkways	623	5.39
Other Highways	678	5.23
City Streets	700	4.87
Between City Buses	266	4.81
Amtrak	278	4.78
Bicycling Facilities	465	4.61
Overall 700	6.20	

Table Three shows the transportation component rated highest by respondents was interstate highways with a mean of 7.40 followed by shipping freight (7.13), out of state air transportation (6.69), special transportation (6.14), in state air transportation (5.72), local transit systems (5.57), pedestrian walkways (5.39) and other highways (5.23). All of the above items were rated higher than 5, meaning their rating fell into the satisfied side of the scale. Four items, bicycling facilities, Amtrak, between city buses and city streets were rated less than 5.

Table Three also shows that the overall level of satisfaction with transportation in Montana was 6.2.

In order to determine if there were differences in the ratings of these items by respondents living in different State Transportation Financial Districts, statistical testing was performed. Statistically significant ($p=.05$) differences were found between Financial Districts in the ratings of 8 items. Table Four summarizes these statistical differences.

Table Four shows that Financial District 1 respondents rate interstate highways highest while Financial District 4 respondents rate interstates the lowest. Table Four shows a similar pattern for shipping freight and instate air transportation. Respondents in Financial District 5 rate out of state air transportation the highest while Financial District 3 respondents rate out of state air the lowest. Respondents in Financial District 5 also rate local transit the highest while Financial District 4 respondents rate local transit the lowest. Financial District 2 respondents rate other highways highest while Financial District 4 respondents rate other highways the lowest. City streets are rated highest by respondents in Financial Districts 3 and 4 and rated the lowest by Financial District 2 respondents. Amtrak is rated the highest by Financial District 1 and 4 respondents and rated the lowest by Financial District 2 and 5 respondents.

TABLE FOUR
MEAN SATISFACTION RATING BY FINANCIAL DISTRICT FOR SIGNIFICANT ITEMS

	Finan Dist 1	Finan Dist 2	Finan Dist 3	Finan Dist 4	Finan Dist 5
Interstates	7.72	7.30	7.18	6.95	7.54
Shipping Freight	7.40	7.37	6.96	6.46	7.08
Out of State Air	6.79	6.78	6.25	6.37	7.08
In State Air	6.32	5.79	4.96	4.94	6.18
Local Transit	5.52	4.24	5.77	4.10	6.95
Other Highways	5.26	5.63	5.29	4.63	5.05
City Streets	4.73	4.36	5.17	5.15	5.05
Amtrak	5.51	3.37	5.25	5.43	3.66

Next the respondents were presented with a list of 23 possible problem areas in transportation and were asked how serious a problem each area was. In their rating of each item, respondents were asked whether the item was not a problem, a small problem, a moderate problem, or a serious problem. Table Five summarizes the results of this evaluation. The order of items in Table Five is based on the mean score on a 1 to 4 scale where 1 is not a problem, 2 is a small problem, 3 is a moderate problem and 4 is a serious problem. All of the problem areas received a mean score between 2 and 3 except for highway approaches which received a score of 1.93.

Table Five shows the availability of passenger service is considered the most serious problem by respondents with a mean rating of 2.99. Table Five further shows that 47.3% of the respondents rated the availability of passenger rail service as a serious problem. Table Five shows the next most serious problem was traffic resulting form population growth followed by the condition of bus depots, and then the condition of roads other than interstates, These four problem areas all received mean scores greater than 2.92.

Low transit use, availability of rural air service, and bicycle facilities make up a second level of area of concern with mean scores of between 2.75 and 2.77. Traffic congestion and connections between different types of transportation were also provided mean ratings greater than 2.50. Single occupancy vehicles, inter city bus availability, rail freight service and local transit availability constitute the next level of concern with mean ratings between 2.44 and 2.48.

Aside from the lack of concern about highway approaches, the condition of interstates, the environmental impact of construction, and on road freight service were problem areas for which the respondents expressed little concern.

TABLE FIVE
RESPONDENT ASSESSMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROBLEM AREAS

	Not a Problem	Small Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	N	Mean
Passenger Rail Avail	17.8%	12.9%	21.9%	47.3%	488	2.99
Traffic from Growth	16.7%	11.8%	31.0%	40.5%	654	2.95
Bus Depot Condition	16.4%	16.1%	25.6%	41.9%	360	2.93
Other Road Condition	8.0%	19.7%	44.8%	27.5%	687	2.92
Low Transit Use	17.1%	18.5%	34.5%	29.8%	362	2.77
Rural Air Avail	19.8%	17.3%	28.6%	34.4%	434	2.77
Bicycle Facilities	20.5%	18.0%	27.8%	33.7%	561	2.75
Traffic Congestion	26.4%	13.3%	28.4%	31.8%	682	2.66
Trans Connection	23.8%	19.0%	33.5%	23.6%	483	2.57
1 Occupant Vehicle	31.9%	13.1%	29.8%	25.2%	634	2.48
Inter City Bus Avail	28.8%	18.6%	29.1%	23.5%	371	2.47
Rail Freight Service	31.7%	17.1%	24.8%	26.4%	375	2.46
Local Transit Avail	32.4%	16.4%	25.7%	25.5%	377	2.44
Transit Scheduling	35.7%	14.4%	29.7%	20.1%	333	2.34
Pedestrian Walkway	32.3%	20.8%	27.7%	19.1%	638	2.34
Support Econ Devop	28.4%	23.1%	35.3%	13.2%	592	2.33
Air Service Avail	32.8%	19.0%	33.9%	14.3%	537	2.30
Air Quality	34.3%	21.2%	27.4%	17.1%	645	2.27
Transport Safety	35.1%	19.0%	33.9%	12.0%	643	2.23
On Road Freight	40.1%	17.8%	28.7%	13.4%	596	2.15
Constr Envir Impact	39.6%	21.1%	27.1%	12.2%	641	2.12
Interstate Condition	38.9%	25.3%	30.0%	5.8%	684	2.03
Highway Approaches	49.0%	19.0%	21.6%	10.4%	663	1.93

Each of the items in Table Five was crosstabbed against State Transportation Financial District to see if there were any statistically significant differences in the way in which respondents in different Finanacial Districts rated the problems. Statistical differences were found in the ratings of 10 of the items. Table Six summarizes these differences. Table Six shows the percentage of respondents in each Financial District believing each of the 10 items was a serious problem.

Table Six shows respondents in Financial District 5 are the most concerned about passenger rail availability while respondents in Financial District 3 are the least concerned. Respondents in Financial District 1 are the most concerned about the increase in traffic from population growth while respondents in Financial District 4 have little concern about such increase in traffic. A similar pattern was found with traffic congestion, single occupancy vehicles, and air quality impacts from road use.

The respondents in Financial Districts 2, 4 and 5 are the most concerned about the condition of bus depots while respondents in Financial District 1 and 3 are the least concerned. Respondents in Financial District 4 are the most concerned about local transit availability and scheduling while the respondents in Financial District 5 are the least concerned about these issues.

TABLE SIX
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS BELIEVING ITEM IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM BY FINANCIAL DISTRICT

	Finan Dist 1	Finan Dist 2	Finan Dist 3	Finan Dist 4	Finan Dist 5
Passenger Rail Avail	41.4%	50.6%	33.1%	56.5%	63.2%
Traffic From Growth	65.5%	43.3%	25.7%	10.0%	32.9%
Bus Dept Condition	32.6%	47.1%	36.6%	51.7%	50.0%
Traffic Congestion	48.0%	36.7%	26.3%	6.9%	23.4%
1 Occupant Vehicles	38.2%	27.9%	21.5%	5.8%	19.6%
Local Transit Avail	30.5%	27.0%	19.6%	55.2%	12.5%
Local Transit Sched	22.7%	18.0%	18.6%	35.0%	15.6%
Pedestrian Walkways	21.5%	16.0%	14.1%	23.1%	22.4%
Air Quality	37.0%	12.0%	8.1%	1.9%	12.7%
Transportation Safety	18.8%	7.3%	8.7%	12.5%	11.6%

Respondent Evaluation of Potential Montana Department of Transportation Action

The respondents were presented with a list of 25 possible action the Montana Department of Transportation could undertake. For each action, the respondents were asked whether they thought the action should have no priority, a low priority, a middle priority or a high priority. Table Seven summarizes the ratings of these actions. The order of items in Table Seven is provided by the mean score for each item on a 1 to 4 scale where 1 is no priority, 2 is low priority, 3 is middle priority and 4 is high priority.

Table Seven shows that 9 actions received a mean priority score of 3.0 or greater. These actions are: improve roads other than interstates, improve transportation safety, increase the capacity of the system, make sure highway improvements are pedestrian friendly, preserve branch rail road lines, ensure transportation for economic development, ensure adequate bicycling facilities, and changing the way people travel to save energy. An additional three items, promote transit use, improve interstates, and minimize the environmental impacts of road construction received mean scores between 2.93 and 2.98.

The lowest priority went to reducing the use of private vehicles and this was the only item to receive a mean score of less than 2.5.

TABLE SEVEN
RESPONDENT ASSESSMENT OF PRIORITY OF DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ACTION

	No Priority	Low Priority	Middle Priority	High Priority	N	Mean
Improve Other Roads	1.9%	9.4%	31.7%	57.0%	679	3.48
Improve Trans Safety	5.5%	10.0%	26.9%	57.7%	659	3.37
Increase Capacity	5.5%	13.3%	35.9%	45.4%	641	3.21
Pedest Friendly Imp	6.4%	15.2%	32.1%	46.4%	660	3.18
Preserve Rail Branches	5.7%	20.3%	31.7%	42.3%	558	3.15
Promote Rail Ser Use	6.3%	21.8%	31.6%	40.4%	560	3.06
Ensure Econ Devop	7.3%	17.0%	40.1%	35.6%	648	3.04
Ensure Adeq Bicycle	8.3%	18.1%	36.4%	37.2%	626	3.03
Change Travel Modes	9.7%	20.8%	29.2%	40.3%	660	3.00
Promote Transit	8.8%	20.9%	34.0%	36.4%	536	2.98
Improve Interstates	6.4%	23.9%	37.5%	32.2%	677	2.96
Minim Evir Imp Constr	10.2%	20.8%	34.9%	34.1%	654	2.93
Retain RR Right Ways	8.8%	28.2%	32.2%	30.7%	602	2.85
Improve Bus Depots	11.8%	26.2%	26.6%	35.4%	458	2.86
Support Inter City Bus	8.5%	25.4%	39.6%	26.5%	520	2.84
Increase Carpooling	13.6%	22.9%	29.9%	33.5%	668	2.83
Prom Inter City Bus	9.8%	26.5%	36.6%	27.1%	528	2.81
Reduce Air Impact	14.0%	26.0%	33.3%	26.7%	649	2.73
Improve Road Freight	11.3%	27.1%	38.7%	22.9%	608	2.73
Reduce Congestion	10.5%	17.0%	23.8%	48.7%	451	2.72
Increase Transit Flex	11.8%	27.5%	38.6%	22.6%	451	2.72
PromoteAvail Air Ser	10.8%	31.7%	36.7%	20.9%	575	2.68
Ensure Rural Air	13.1%	29.8%	35.1%	22.0%	550	2.66
Reg Hghwy Approach	16.3%	28.7%	36.2%	18.9%	652	2.58
Reduce Private Vehicle	27.4%	35.1%	27.1%	10.4%	656	2.20

These items were also crosstabbed by State Transportation Financial District to determine if there were differences in the way respondents in different Financial Districts prioritized the items. Statistically significant differences were found in the way respondents from different Financial Districts prioritized 10 of the items. These differences are summarized in Table Eight. The numbers in Table Eight are the percentages of respondents in each Financial District who gave the item a high priority.

Table Eight shows respondents from Financial District 1 are the most likely to give increasing the capacity of our transportation system a high priority while Financial District 4 respondents are the least likely to give increasing capacity a high priority. A similar pattern of responses was found with changing travel modes, minimizing the environmental impacts of road construction, increasing carpooling, reducing the air quality impacts of road use, reducing traffic congestion, and increasing the flexibility of local transit.

Financial District 2 respondents were the most likely to assign a high priority to improving bus depots while Financial District 4 respondents were the least likely to assign a high priority to bus depots. A similar pattern was found with regulating highway approaches and reducing private vehicle use.

TABLE EIGHT
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS GIVING ITEMS A HIGH PRIORITY BY FINANCIAL DISTRICT

	Finan Dist 1	Finan Dist 2	Finan Dist 3	Finan Dist 4	Finan Dist 5
Increase Capacity	53.5%	49.6%	37.3%	34.0%	44.4%
Change Travel Modes	46.9%	43.2%	32.0%	30.4%	41.1%
Minim Envir Imp Const	39.9%	35.7%	30.7%	25.0%	32.0%
Improve Bus Depots	30.3%	44.3%	31.6%	27.0%	40.6%
Increase Carpooling	41.1%	36.8%	27.5%	22.4%	31.8%
Reduce Air Impact	36.8%	23.6%	23.2%	12.0%	26.4%
Reduce Congestion	69.5%	51.6%	40.5%	16.7%	41.7%
Local Transit Flex	29.4%	21.8%	13.6%	6.1%	28.7%
Reg Hghwy Approach	18.2%	23.2%	18.4%	7.3%	19.7%
Reduce Private Veh	12.6%	15.2%	7.8%	1.9%	9.5%

The respondents were asked if they could think of any additional tranportation related problems that could be addressed by the Montana Department of Transportation. These answers were recorded in one line of type as open ended answers. Table Nine summarizes the answers that were given by at least 3 respondents.

TABLE NINE
OTHER PROBLEM AREAS

Better Secondary Road Maint.	43	16.1%
More Passenger Rail service	25	9.3%
Widen Highway 93	24	9.0%
More Bus Service	21	7.9%
Weight/length Restrict on Trucks	19	7.1%
Better Traffic Law Enforcement	15	5.6%
More/Cheaper Air Service	13	4.9%
Widen State Highways	13	4.9%
Better Road Const Traffic Flow	10	3.7%
Repair Potholes in Cities	9	3.4%
Widen Billings-Great Falls Road	9	3.4%
More Bicycle-Pedestrian Access	9	3.4%
Improve 10th Ave in Great Falls	8	3.0%
Lower Fuel Taxes	8	3.0%
Better/Cleaner/More Rest Areas	6	2.2%

Table Nine (continued)

Control Drunk Driving	6	2.2%
Better School Bus Safety	6	2.2%
More Special Transportation	5	1.9%
Too Many Bicycles	4	1.5%
Better Access to Roads	4	1.5%
Stop lights instead of signs	4	1.5%
Deer Problem	3	1.1%
No enough taxis	3	1.1%

Table Nine shows that 16.1% of the responses concerned better maintenance of secondary roads in Montana and many of the respondents who provided this answer also specifically mentioned winter maintenance. The second most common answer was more or better passenger rail service (9.3%), followed by widen Highway 93 (9.0%), more bus service (7.9%), more weight and length restrictions on semi-trucks (7.1%), better enforcement of traffic laws (5.6%), more and cheaper air service (4.9%), widen state highways (4.9%), and better traffic flow during road construction (3.7%).

Respondents were asked if there was anything not happening with the state transportation system that they would like to see happen. This question was also asked in an open ended manner and answers up to one line of type in length were recorded. Table Ten summarizes responses to this question that were given by at least 3 respondents.

TABLE TEN
WHAT IS NOT HAPPENING THAT SHOULD BE HAPPENING

More Passenger Rail Service	46	18.2%
Better Secondary Road Maint	43	17.0%
More Bus Service	41	16.2%
More/Cheaper Air Service	21	8.3%
More Bicycle/Pedestrian Access	14	5.5%
Widen Highway 93	14	5.5%
Widen Highways	13	5.1%
Have Done a Good Job	10	3.9%
Weight/Length Restriction-Trucks	8	3.2%
Improve 10th Ave in Great Falls	7	2.8%
Better Enforcement of Laws	6	2.4%
Traffic Congestion In Bozeman	4	1.6%
Fix Potholes in City Streets	4	1.6%
More Signs on Highways	4	1.6%
More/Better Special Transport	3	1.2%
Widen Billings-Great Falls Road	3	1.2%
Widen Highway 2	3	1.2%
More/Cleaner/Better Rest Areas	3	1.2%

The answers in Table Ten point to the same basic areas as the answers in Table Nine: more and better rail service, better secondary road maintenance, more bus service, bicycle and pedestrian access, and widen state highways especially Highway 93. Table Ten also shows that 10 respondents praised the Department of Transportation for doing a good job.

The respondents were asked how important it was for the Department of Transportation to undertake three other actions: manage access to highways, help local jurisdictions with land use planning related to transportation and protect highway rights of ways for future expansion. Table Eleven summarizes the respondents answers to these three questions. The order of items in Table Eleven is provided by the mean score for each item on a scale where 1 is not important, 2 is somewhat important, 3 is important, and 4 is very important. Table Eleven shows that respondents judged managing access to highways the most important of these items, followed by helping local jurisdictions with land use planning and then protecting highway right of ways for future expansion.

TABLE ELEVEN
RESPONDENTS ASSESSMENT OF THREE ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	N	Mean
Manage Access	5.0%	17.4%	37.7%	39.8%	665	3.12
Local Land Use	7.6%	19.1%	40.4%	32.8%	643	2.98
Prot for Expan	5.9%	26.0%	35.2%	32.9%	647	2.95

No statistically significant differences were found in how respondents from different Transportation Financial Districts rated the importance of these items.

The respondents were asked to indicate if they supported or opposed spending monies raised from fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees on 7 different activities. In indicating their level of support for each activity, respondents were asked whether they strongly opposed, opposed, supported or strongly supported the activity. Table Twelve summarizes respondent support for these 7 activities. As with other tables, the order of the items in Table Twelve is based on the mean score for each item. In this table, the mean is on a 1 to 4 scale where 1 is strongly oppose, 2 is oppose, 3 is support, and 4 is strongly support.

Table Twelve shows the mean support ratings range from a high of 2.78 for bicycling and pedestrian improvements to a low of 2.24 for bus depot condition improvement.

TABLE TWELVE
RESPONDENT SUPPORT FOR EXPENDITURE OF MONIES COLLECTED FROM FUEL TAXES AND VEHICLE REGISTRATION ON TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS

	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Support	Strongly Support	N	Mean
Bicycle & Pedestrian	5.9%	22.5%	59.4%	12.2%	662	2.78
Land Use Planning	4.2%	28.1%	60.2%	7.6%	620	2.71
Van Pools	7.5%	37.0%	48.0%	7.5%	654	2.55
Inter City Buses	8.8%	35.4%	50.4%	5.4%	633	2.52
Branch RR Lines	11.0%	46.8%	36.6%	5.6%	620	2.37
Rural Air Service	10.1%	49.3%	36.2%	4.5%	605	2.35
Bus Depots	14.2%	50.6%	31.7%	3.4%	618	2.24

These rating were also crosstabbed by Transportation Financial District to determine if any statistical differences existed in the way in which respondents from different Financial Districts supported each item. A statistically significant difference was found for the item with the highest support, bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The strongest support of this item came from Financial District 1 respondents while the strongest opposition came from Financial District 4 respondents. Financial District 5 and 2 respondents were the next most supportive of this item while Financial District 3 respondents offered the next highest level of opposition.

A nearly statistically significant difference was found in the next most supported activity of land use planning. The highest level of support for this activity came from Financial District 2 respondents.

The respondents were presented with 4 general alternative plans for the future of transportation in Montana. The four plans were: 1. No change from the way things are which would result in declining services; 2. Preserve the existing system and focus on maintaining today's system and services without addressing growth; 3. Maintain the current level of mobility and meet the increasing needs of the fastest growing areas; and 4. Develop a higher service multimodal system which would include considerable new investments in public transportation and highways.

The respondents were asked for their first and second choices among these alternative plans. Table Thirteen summarizes the respondents' choices. Table Thirteen shows the third alternative of meeting new needs was the top first choice of respondents and was mentioned by 66.8%. The second top choice was a multimodal system (24.2%). Table Thirteen shows that on second choice, 43.8% of the respondents mentioned a multimodal system while 29.4% selected the third alternative of meeting new needs.

When both the first and second choice are considered together, Table Thirteen shows that 92.2% of the respondents mentioned the third alternative of meeting new needs as either their number 1 or number 2 choice while 62% mentioned the multimodal system as either their first or second choice.

TABLE THIRTEEN
RESPONDENT EVALUATION OF FOUR ALTERNATIVE PLANS

First Choice

Meet New Needs	452	66.8%
Multimodal System	164	24.2%
Preserve System	46	6.8%
Make No Changes	15	2.2%

Second Choice

Multimodal System	256	43.8%
Meet New Needs	172	29.4%
Preserve System	139	23.8%
Make No Changes	18	3.1%

Both Choices

Meet New Needs	624	92.2%
Multimodal System	420	62.0%
Preserve System	185	27.3%
Make No Changes	33	4.9%

No statistically significant differences were found in the way in which respondents from different Financial Districts rated these 4 alternative plans.

SUMMARY

A telephone survey was completed with 710 randomly selected adult residents of Montana to find out what Montanans thought about the current state of transportation in Montana and to get public input on the future of transportation in Montana. Half the respondents were male and half were female. The mean age of respondents was 44.8, and the mean educational level was 14.1. Fifty two percent of the respondents were born in Montana and the average tenure in the state for those who weren't born here was 20.9 years. Twenty six percent of the respondents resided in Financial District 1, 18.8% in Financial District 2, 22.8% in Financial District 3, 8.9% in Financial District 4, and 23.3% in Financial District 5.

The respondents expressed the most satisfaction with interstate highways and the freight shipping capacity in Montana. They also seemed satisfied with out of state air transportation, special transportation, and to a lesser extent were satisfied with in state air transportation, local transit, pedestrian walkways and other highways. They expressed dissatisfaction with city streets, between city buses, Amtrak, and bicycling facilities. Respondents gave an overall mean rating of 6.2 on a 1 to 10 scale to transportation in Montana.

Respondents from different Financial Districts differed on their ratings of interstates, shipping freight, out of state air, in state air, local transit, other highways, city streets, and Amtrak.

When asked to rate the seriousness of 23 possible problem areas in transportation, passenger rail service was considered the most serious problem followed by increasing traffic from growth, bus depot condition, and the condition of highways other than interstates. Respondents expressed the least amount of concern about highway approaches, the condition of interstates, the environmental impact of construction, and on the road freight shipping.

Respondents from different Financial Districts differed in how they rated passenger rail availability, increased traffic from growth, the condition of bus depots, traffic congestion, 1 occupant vehicles, local transit availability, local transit scheduling, pedestrian walkways, air quality impacts from road use and transportation safety.

When respondents were asked to assign priorities to 25 possible future actions on the part of the State Department of Transportation, the highest priorities were assigned to improving roads other than interstates, improving transportation safety, increase the capacity of the system, pedestrian friendly highway improvements, and preserving branch railroad lines. The lowest priority was given to reducing private vehicle use followed by regulating highway approaches and ensuring rural air service.

Respondents from the different Financial Districts differed on the priorities they assigned to increasing capacity, changing the travel modes of people to save energy, minimizing environmental impacts of construction, improving bus depots, increasing carpooling, reducing air quality impacts of road use, reducing congestion, improving local transit flexibility, regulating highway approaches and reducing the use of private vehicles.

Respondents were asked what other problems existed with transportation in Montana. The most common answers to this question were: Maintenance of secondary state roads especially in the winter, the need for more passenger rail service, the need to widen state highways, especially Highway 93, more bus service, more restrictions on the weight and length of semi trucks, better enforcement of traffic laws, and more and cheaper air transportation.

Respondents believed that managing access to highways was more important than helping local jurisdictions with land use planning or protecting highway right of ways for future expansion, although all 3 activities were seen as important.

When asked their level of support for spending monies from fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees on 7 different activities, respondents supported bicycle and pedestrian related improvements the most, followed by land use planning, van pools and inter city buses. The least support went to improving the condition of bus depots.

The respondents first choice as a plan for the future of transportation in Montana is to maintain the current level of mobility and focus on meeting the new needs in the fastest growing areas. The second choice as a future plan was a high service, multimodal system.

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